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The Spirit Lamp.

No. I.

MAY 6, 1892.

EDITORIAL.

To Members of the University.

SIR or MADAM,

A supply creates a demand; or the following pages might never have been written.

We offer to all, and sell to our readers only, a Periodical combining the advantages of good Print, good Grammar, and good Intentions.

Had these qualities been better appreciated, there can be no doubt that the want of such a periodical would have been more generally felt.

This want the *SPIRIT LAMP* will endeavour to supply. In a University like this a paper should not, we think, aim at Originality. Truthfulness, Modesty, and general Solidity, are the virtues it may be expected to realise. We shall therefore be sparing of News, Invective and Puffs Poetical.

To divulge an aim is to put a premium upon failure; otherwise we should hasten to add that to be Typical rather than Topical is our highest aspiration.

It cannot be understood too early, nor repeated too often, that the views of the Editor (who is not responsible for those

of his contributors) are profoundly Unpolitical, Unsocial, Illiterate, and Unathletic. He pledges his word not to open any charity subscription in these columns. He has no connection with any friendly society whatever. His one desire is to deal (as fairly as possible) with the public, and to establish a new paper on a sound financial basis.

An efficient staff has been engaged, and the conduct of the *Spirit Lamp* has been distributed in four departments, viz., (1) Mild Criticism, (2) Really Sensible Articles, (3) Philosophy, (4) Other Light Literature. The last department, which is infinitely the most important, has been entrusted to a number of gentlemen of varied and incalculable ability. Every shade of opinion will be represented, and it is safe to say that Realism, Idealism, Impressionism, and the Dissective method, will find worthy exposition in our columns.

In these days of sharp definition and cut and dried analysis the Editor is sure to be asked what vein of humour exactly he proposes to indulge. Will it be the broad, the subtle, the old, the new, the obvious, the dry, or the cynical?

It is rather early to give a decided answer; but there can be no harm in saying that the Editor is personally inclined to see what can be made of the unconscious humour of Shakespeare's Comedies and the Book of Common Prayer: as sources of laughter they appear to be still fairly fresh. It is hoped that the *Spirit Lamp* will be able to draw a clear line of demarcation between wit and vulgarity; but no doubt a certain number of really funny jokes will be set apart for those who cannot see the other sort.

It should be stated at the outset that the *Spirit Lamp* fears no kind of competition. When we have added that we appeal exclusively to the *enlightened*, the grounds of our self-confidence will be obvious to all.

In conclusion, we do not think we have anything more to say: a short preface is constantly asserted to be the truest economy of the journal.

Finally, we humbly give our readers leave to read on.

THE GALLEY SLAVE.

At my window I sit in October,
And ask, as I sit there at ease,
"Are these gentlemen sane? are they sober?
Or what the G - y N - ck - lls are these?"
I watch with contemptuous pity
The multitudes passing before,
And I say (the refrain of my ditty):
"Poor galley slaves chained to the oar!"
Have they rooms? have they pipes and tobacco?
Do they know of these treasures the use?
Don't they know what it is to be slack? O,
Can anyone be so obtuse?
Is digestion with them a mere cipher?
And comfort a name, nothing more?
As soon be a convict, a "lifer,"
As a galley slave chained to the oar.
Is it all for a little cheap glory,
They stiffen, they sweat, and they freeze,
When the meadows with frost are all hoary,
And icicles hang from their knees?
Perhaps win an oar for a trophy,
Be a god for scouts' boys to adore!
Why, when you might lounge and be loafy,
Be a galley slave chained to the oar?
By all means when summer is leafy,
The air and the sunshine a feast,
—Don't train till you're brawny and beefy:
'Tis making a man but a beast—
But have your canoe, your outrigger,
Your punt, and go boating galore;
But never, I counsel you, figure
As a galley slave chained to the oar.

**Awpos.*

CABALE UND LIEBE.

MANY a mad magenta minute
Lights the lavender of life;
Keran-Happuch at her spinet
Psalms the scarlet song of strife:
Keran-Happuch is my wife.

Spinet carving olive stanzas,
 Orange fricassees of sound,
 Nicotine extravaganzas,
 Like a cheese at evening found,
 Sitting primrose on the ground !

Spinet, squirt thy chiaroscuro
 On the omelette of the past,
 Bathe our elegiac bureau,
 Bind thy nightshirt to the mast—
 Chocolate with the lenten fast !

Never sing thy mauve November
 O'er the treacle crest of Hope,
 With a harsh, peagreen "Remember"
 Baked in a kaleidoscope :
 Buttercup—then Heliotrope.

Never—but my satin hookah
 Swims to meet spring's blue decay,
 Whispering to each green onlooker,
 Like a curried castaway,
 "Ah ! the midnight of the Day !"

DOETHE.

THE SCOUT.

To those not yet fully conversant with the gamplike properties of the umbrella of the anonymous (a real *Fox's* paragon frame), our temerity must indeed appear amazing.

THE SCOUT !

Gods ! Is this a subject for discussion ? Is HE the princely, the delicately-treading, the inimitable, to be dismembered by the report of an ephemeral college magazine ?

* * * *

Exquisite sir, a word with you. 'Tis with no carping desire to pick the pocket of propriety, to cast, so to speak, the mud of mediocrity on the linen of the immaculate, that we beg to approach the object (and what an object !) of our endeavouring.

No !

But at the same time we must be wary, very wary, and we are the first to acknowledge it, how we trifle with this conviction of our own insignificance. We must repress, and with no silken-cased fingers, that titillating sense of the illicit, that toying with the forbidden, that ever lurk, like some inveterate anaconda, in the vacant ground that separates the sunny lowlands of Deference from the grisly precipice of Depreciation.

To put it negligently in a nutshell:

Nos numerus sumus et fruges consumere nati.

And what can better open our eyes to this reality than to close them in imagination for a few brief moments. We are in bed (we must here ask the reader to follow us carefully), waiting, with an approximation to an elegant nonchalance—the advent of the (nay, *our*) scout.

The first faint mutterings of the approaching convulsion, heralded perchance by nothing more significant (but after all what motion of the scout is without significance?) than the clashing of a breakfast-cup or the fall of a coalbox, annihilate once and for all our innocent conviction in the dignity of *déshabille*. We feel, though as yet we behold it not, his iron-eagle eye upon us, noting with the encyclopædic glance of a passionless and instantly-repressed criticism, the sleepers in our eyes, the hair-film on our faces, the very soda-water bottle lurking beneath our rumpled couch.

We feel all this . . . and with a strange leap from the future to the present our scout draws up an unoffending bedroom blind, with stern but perfect mastery over the instrument and a placid forgetfulness of its creak. But his abnegation (we forgot, by the way, to say that he first *knocked*; yes, knocked at our inanimate and unworthy door!) goes a step further—he informs us that it is half-past seven. But at this point we can no longer control our emotion, and we fling ourselves from our bed determined to allow the anomalous position no longer to continue.

* * * * *

The terrible temptation to suppose ourselves the possessors of our own rooms has lost its ancient power; the revolting

idea that we can possibly possess a claim on the services of this gifted being has faded from our minds; the real truth that the Scout is in fact the master of the situation, the true prince, the rightful heir, has blazed on us in native majesty, and with a cry of anguish we fly in nightgowned nakedness for pity to his knee.

* * * * *

But 'tis four of the clock, and my lamp is going out.

L. C.

ISIS UNVEILED.

A CHILD may set the Thames on fire,
Left to his own devices:
It would make Hercules perspire,
To try and float *The Isis*.

FLABATSKI.

THE NEWMAN STATUE,

OR,

INSULAR PREJUDICES.

A DRAMA IN TWO ACTS, BY OTTO TREBELLIANUS MINOR.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DOCTOR HINTZ, *a Bigot*.

PROFESSOR PAUL GRAVE, *a Compiler*.

THOMAS JONES, }
JOHN JONES, } *Undergraduates of Jesus College.*

VERO CIPO, *an itinerant Italian, Vendor of Statuettes.*

A PROCTOR.

BULLDOGS.

GHOST OF C. S. CALVERLEY.

Duration of Action: 2—3 hours.

Date: February, 1892.

ACT I.

Scene Broad Street (opposite Trinity).

Time Midnight.

Enter CANON HINTZ, *habited as a bigot*.

HINTZ. 'Ail, 'allowed spot, 'ail, blessed project, since
Thou hast brought notoriety to Hintz:
Yes Fame is mine, for all the Daily Press

My zealous action either curse or bless ;
 Cursing or blessing—I have little care,
 Obscurity's the one thing hard to bear.
 Who is notorious now if I am not ?
 My soporific sermons are forgot,
 Now I am known (e'en out of Oxford), known
 As one who dared defend almost alone
 His Faith, his Country, and his Queen—God bless her !
 —The one renowned Divinity Professor.
 Gnash thy teeth M**•**barly, and Dr**•**v**•**r, wince—
 Ye are eclipsed by Doctor William Hintz.
 (*He leans against the Cabmen's Refuge and mops his brow.*)

From the other side enter TWO UNDERGRADUATES disguised.

FIRST U. Are we alone ? The moment, friend, is come
 For heroism—I may say martyrdom :
 Leaving the pipe, the fire, the easy chair,
 Braving the chilly February air,
 The vigilance of college porters cheating,
 We come to hold our Indignation Meeting :
 Privately—for we've no desire for fame,
 And—ah, what modesty !—disguised we came.

SECOND U. 'Tis well : but still methinks 'twould be more
 pleasant
 Were our good friend and brother bigot present :
 I long to speak, my speech to be repeating :
 Two may be company, but three's a meeting.

FIRST U. Yes, Jones's lateness fills me with surprise :
 Besides, I'm tired of carrying his disguise.

HINTZ (*recovering himself*). Give it to me—I feel an honest
 shame ;

Where Conscience should have moved, I followed Fame :
Mea culpa, I'm rebuked : (but what Latinity !)
 You conquer the Professor of Divinity.
 Your pure devotion fires my aged blood ;
 Give me the duds—I'll be your third.

SECOND U. The dud—
 There's only one.

FIRST U. Your diction, sir, is low ;
Divinity Professors should say 'clo'.

HINTZ. Rebuked in diction, as outdone in will—
 Young Oxford, with all thy faults I love thee still!
(*Puts on the disguise.*)

(Voice from within the Refuge, as one half asleep, sings).

I fancied that I heard a voice, the voice of an old man,
I fancied that I heard it speak a line that didn't scan :
I fancy I've authority to speak as one who knows,
But Divinity Professors should confine themselves to
Prose.

HINTZ. Speak, saintly youths, that put the old to shame,
And tell me each of you his Christian name ;
Surnames I need not ask.

FIRST U. Alas! he sees us—
How can he do it?—to be men of Jesus.

SECOND U. Well, have it out at once, and make no bones—
His name is John and mine is Thomas—Jones.

HINTZ. Good Apostolic names. Were ye of those*
—Those twelve—who, when your colleague dared oppose
Our efforts, at the Union, did not spare
To vote against a Jesus man?

BOTH U. We were.

HINTZ. Heroic souls ! were ye indeed of them ?
 You'll be as famous soon as M.F.M. :
 But still, I advise you, don't misconstrue me,
 Avoid St. John Street, number 23.

(Voice from within with a cry as of a musical connoisseur hearing a false note.)

Ah! he's done it again, and it wakes me each time,
 His verses that either don't scan or don't rhyme :
 I really shall have to acquaint him, I fear,
 That the well-known Professor of Poetry's here.

HINTZ. But let's to business—you are getting drowsy ;

* Alluding to a motion at the Union on February 11th, proposed by H. E. A. Cotton, B.A., Jesus (Junior Treasurer), and rejected by a majority of 12.

We must begin the meeting, that'll rouse ye:—

(Begins to speak.)

It's gratifying, sirs, to see with us,
Enthusiastic and unanimous,
A meeting, which, except the one before,
Excelled in size I think I never saw—

(Voice from within, with a howl.)

Ugh! he's done it again—what a horrible rhyme!
I really can't stand it—I must speak this time:
That gentleman can have no notion, it's clear,
How he hurts the Professor of Poetry's ear.

HINTZ *(hearing sound)*. Ha! Opposition? Boys, be up and doin'.

If not unanimous the meeting's ruin'd.

(PROF. PAUL GRAVE *enters in a nightshirt and a passion from the Refuge.*)

PAUL. D'you know, sir, a bad rhyme to me is pain?

You've done it thrice, and you may do't again.

HINTZ. What were you up to there?

PAUL. I was in search

Of new ideas—they've left me long i' th' lurch:

I thought a night in this romantic station

Might very possibly bring inspiration;

But sleep—while you were making verse like prose?

Why, no sir, I could not so much as doze:

Your verses (on the top of a good supper)

Would keep awake a second Martin Tupper!

You must take lessons, sir; just come to me:

Put down your name—of course there'll be a fee.

HINTZ *(with severity)*. Hush, hush, Professor, quite enough of rhymes.

You wrote, I think, a letter to the *Times*

So indistinct that nobody could tell

At all which side you advocated?

PAUL. Well,

I *did* say Newman was both good and gifted:

But lest the-academic lute be rifted—

(Sweet metaphor!) believe me, I recant;

I am your true unbending Protestant.

I'm with you.

FIRST U. Good: but let the meeting start—

I've half forgot the speech I had by heart.

HINTZ. Begin, before the other half go too,

Begin at once and I will follow you.

(PROF. PAUL GRAVE *begins to fall asleep.*)

FIRST U. (*speaks*). Professors, gentlemen, and one from Jesus,

I come to bury—

PAUL (*leaping up suddenly*). Why, the words are Cæsar's!

I know—I've read it—no they're not—at least,

They're Antony's of Cæsar when deceased!

You don't catch Poetry Professors napping—

HINTZ. I've heard that something of the sort *did* happen,

And not so long ago.

PAUL. Ugh! What a rhyme!

FIRST U. Oh dear, while you are wrangling all this time,

I have forgotten all I meant to say,

In fact the whole speech's simply oozed away;

I felt it going, bit by bit, such pain—

Oh dear, I wish I were in bed again.

BOTH U. Oh dear, O dear, I wish I were in bed.

HINTZ (*soothingly*). Don't be disheartened; I will speak
instead,

And see if I can guess what you'd have said!

(*Begins to speak.*)

"I come to bury statues, not to raise 'em;

The evil that men do lives after—"

FIRST U. Hear,

Hear!

PAUL. Where's the rhyme in that? Blank verse? I fear

We'd really better have heard Mr. Jones.

HINTZ (*continues unmoved*). "The good is oft interréd with
their bones—"

PAUL. Stop, Sir! I feel an inspiration, quick!

At least—I really feel a little sick:

It cannot only be the lobster salad:

'Tis a divine afflatus! 'Tis a ballad!

(Sings.)

Oh Newman was an Anglican who dared to leave the Church,
Took all our best young men with him, and left us in the lurch,
And some of us expect to see the same thing done by Gore,
And as for young men, he would carry with him dozens more!
So Newman is an enemy, and enemies, you know,
If you do think they have merits, you must never tell 'em so!
And Newman was the author, too, of one or even two
Fine hymns in a collection where fine hymns are very few!
The scholar-saint, the type of all that's holiest and that's best,
But still he was the other side, and that must be the test:
Of course his books are charming, and the man was charming
too,

But it might provoke comparisons, were we to take that view!
HINTZ. (And people might say such rude things—O, that
would never do!)

PAUL. It's absurd to say "condemn the change but recognise
the man":

One ought to be a Christian—but be first a partizan!

HINTZ. We should like to have burnt 'im, but couldn't do
that you know!

So we take our revenge now, and won't 'ave 'is statue, no!

ALL (*dancing*). Then let bigotry prevail,
Generosity turn tail!

We never, never, never, never, will put up his statue, no!

PAUL (*with a great sigh of relief*). Ah! I feel better now:
beyond all question

That's been the saving of my poor digestion.

Now let us hold a meeting, if you will;

But I am terribly afraid of chill:

Let's go inside—'twill make a splendid Hall—

And overflow if it won't hold us all.

(They all enter the Cabmen's Refuge).

HINTZ (*rises to speak*). Once more I will appeal to you to-night,
Gentlemen, on two grounds to work and fight
Against the Papists—who (if you have seen
Lord Salisbury's speech*) are enemies of the Queen,

* At Exeter, January 1892.

The Spirit Lamp.

The Country, Parliament, the Faith—and Me :
 And, as I think you cannot fail to see,
 If you have read the Duke of Norfolk's letters,
 Are getting uppish just for want of fetters.
 They ask us to put Newman's statue here
 Just because he was good and great : it's clear
 That it's absurd ! Well, we have struggled, lied,
 (Lies in a cause so good are justified)
 Said 'twas a site that was in actual view
 Of the Martyrs' Monument—which I and you
 And all good Christians think a precious mark
 Of England's extrication from the dark
 Of Papistry ; and further understand
 That it is architecturally grand—
 Which brings me to my second point : I say
 This splendid building where we meet to-day
 Must go if Newman's statue comes instead,
 And of such Vandalism as that what need be said ?
 All that we would most dearly wish to keep,
 This statue threatens : (*breaks off suddenly*) Lord, they're
 all asleep !
 Ah ! I was ever thus : when *shall* I reach
 The point when people'll listen when I preach ?

(Curtain falls.)

END OF ACT I.

*(The Second Act will follow in the next number.)***NOTICES.**

THE columns of the *Spirit Lamp* are open to all the talents. We shall be glad to receive contributions in Prose or in Verse. They should be written on *one* side of the paper only, and sent in not later than the *Wednesday before publication*, to

THE EDITOR,
 c/o MR. JAMES THORNTON,
 HIGH STREET.

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The Spirit Lamp.

No. II.

MAY 13, 1892.

THE GATES OF GAZA.

I.

It is a dangerous thing to try to define a class which includes the majority. Mere modesty forbids me to define by negation and say what a Philistine is not; and with a subject so multi-form, it is not easy to grasp some quality which shall be really characteristic. I might say "Most Philistines wear collars," which would be true, and would imply at small cost a superficial sneer at a dastard respectability; but on the other hand I should offend little Jenkinsop, who is as good a fellow as ever lived, and not a bit of a Philistine, but who has made a most effective use of convention in the matter of dress. I have heard it said (by one of the majority, to be sure, speaking to his brother) that your Philistine is never cultured. Not cultured! Why, I protest, sir, culture was born in Philistia, the child of the Duke of Escalon by a Miss Blue, who caught the Duke while visiting the country with a reading party, and has since persuaded her sisters to naturalise themselves on the strength of it: 'twas born, I say, in Philistia, and a large and increasing number of natives are at the present time connected with that stock. Mr. MyriandreuS Slang and Mr. Sinbad Savage are fine examples, and I think I shall use them as a means of definition by select analysis.

Slang is an author, which is exactly what his parents hoped

he would be. At twelve years old he began as a translator of Latin Elegiacs into English in the original metre. At fifteen he deserted Ovid for Klopstock, and produced some versions of that great German which were generally admired at the time, though criticised by the *Saturday Review* with an asperity which would possibly have crushed the young life out of a weaker singer. At the present time he can not only translate, but compose original pieces in five living and two dead languages. Did you ever see the exquisite French *ballade* he wrote in one of his livelier moods? It begins:

"J'aime par les tièdes dimanches
Me balancer avec Babette,
En côtoyant ses molles hanches,
Sur une frêle escarpolette."

Myriandreu's favourite poets are Longfellow and Lamartine. Byron he admires prodigiously, but there are certain passages of Don Juan which no modest man has ever read, and Myriandreu's Slang (after what he has heard of them) will not be the first. Longfellow he has finely compared in an exquisite ode to the memory of that great man, with

"The swallow's note of tender counterpoint,
Interpreter to Europe of the West."

He has read the "Excursion" altogether thirteen times (this is in May, 1892); and "never," he will tell you earnestly, "without discovering in Wordsworth some fresh anticipation of the latest results of contemporary science."

The poet of the satirist used to grow long hair and moustachios and wear velvet and fine linen. When he walked (a thing he never did in the daytime, but which, he assured you, was his frequent practice during the small hours) his motions had all the irresponsible buoyancy of the balloon, the lubricity of a pair of skates, and the languor of a self-conscious cockatoo. Myriandreu's Slang is above all things a man of his times. He has put away these childish things. He walks at all hours, and with a certain modest manliness of gait. "Let me be alone with Nature," he says. "We understand each other. Books you can get anywhere, but thought lives only in the open air." In all weathers he wears knickerbockers

and a mackintosh. He loves the rain better than anything, except a really strong east wind. Often he will spend a quarter of an hour under an oak tree near Eltham, with a copy of the "Harmonies Poétiques" under his arm, watching an April shower fall or a trout pool doing nothing.

His favourite opinions are that manliness is a quality reserved for the British; and that if you correct your poetry you cannot have inspiration.

Finally, in art he believes in nothing done out of Italy, except Sir J. Reynolds and Sir F. Leighton; and as for music, though he used to enjoy military bands pretty well, he has lately resolved that "the sister arts" can never have a community of admirers.

What a different man is that other cultured Philistine, Mr. Sinbad Savage, the incarnation of modernity, the soul of the "cénacle," a person so interesting as to deserve a whole article to himself. He shall get it. Y.

THE NEWMAN STATUE.

OR

INSULAR PREJUDICES.

A DRAMA IN TWO ACTS, BY OTTO TREBELLIANUS MINOR.

ACT II.

Place Inside the Refuge.

Time An Hour later.

PAUL (*half awake*). Hintz, have you slept?

HINTZ. I? Slept? No, not a wink:

How *can* I make them listen? I can't think.

It's always so—my lectures, sermons, speeches;

They will not hear a Body* when he preaches.

How, Paul Grave, how? Do answer me my question:

I shall be grateful for the least suggestion.

PAUL. TEA.

HINTZ. Excellent! Superb! Oh it was true

That inspirations really come to you:

* Presumably the Body of our Humiliation.

I did not, I confess, believe before,
 But now there's no denying any more.
 Tea! Yes I will, whene'er I mean to preach
 Or speak, or lecture, give some tea to each
 Of the congregation or the audience :
 I really think the effect will be immense :
 Give 'em strong tea—or coffee, I suppose?—
 And I defy 'em to so much as doze!

Enter VERO CIPPO carrying statuettes of Apollo, Venus, etc. He goes to the door and knocks: HINTZ opens, and seeing his wares, springs at his throat.

HINTZ. Fiend—you've the impudence to me to bring
 An effigy of that accursed thing
 I've laboured all these weeks to bring to naught :
 I'll pay you out, Sir, for what you have brought.
(Drives him away with some contumely.)

Enter a PROCTOR with BULLDOGS.

PROCTOR. Ha! what have you sniffed out, my best of spies?
 What? Doctor Hintz? Well, this is a surprise!
 And Doctor Hintz in such a strange disguise!

HINTZ. Come in, come in; I'm going to speak again—
 PROC. Speak?

HINTZ. Upon Newman, the familiar strain;
 Yes I will speak until my voice shall break,
 Now I know how to make 'em keep awake.

PROC. I'm not sure that it's discipline, but still
 Since you're so pressing, Dr. Hintz, I will.

[They enter.]

(HINTZ proceeds to make tea with a Spirit Lamp, serves it round, and then begins to speak.)

Secure, as I believe, of your attention
 (Thanks to my friends' original invention)
 I venture to address you once again :
 Gentlemen, Bulldogs, and two Jesus men,

[BULLDOGS go to sleep.]

Professor Newman is no more alone;

We too refuse his brother's charm to own.

[FIRST UND. *drops off.*

Intolerance, so long discredited,

Dares once again to lift its sacred head :

[SECOND UND. *drops off.*

Dulness once more itself may advertize :

Pull down a reputation and you rise :

Or if you cannot pull it down, at least

By the attempt your fame will be increased.

Newman alive, we tried in vain to climb

Up to his height ;—once dead—it is our time !

[*All go to sleep.*

Among the martyrs we shall have a niche ;

To us they will put up a statue, which

Protestant crowds will gaze upon adoring,

And Papists wince to see. But what's that ? Snoring ?

PAUL (*in his sleep*). Oh for originality, alack !

Will my ideas never more come back ?

HINTZ (*with a groan*). Merciful Heavens ! even the tea has failed :

My soporific accents have prevailed !

He rushes out of the Refuge, when enter from a window of Balliol a

GHOST : *it approaches.*

HINTZ (*with horror*). Calverley ! C. S. C. ! Now Heaven have grace ;

How dare I the great foe of dulness face ?

GHOST (*disregarding him sings*)—

Thus, the old trick remembered still,

Thus, every difficulty weather'd,

I come, escaped by the familiar method.

What is the reason now that has

Tempted me hither ? O what is it ?

Why, why the glimpses of the gas

Revisit ?

Oxford was never kind to me :

Merit she never could appreciate :

Not I, nor Shelley, even he,
 Could teach ye it.

You sent me down, as you did him :
 I found a kindlier Alma Mater ;
 You would be better did you im-
 itate her !

And now some fools have dared to sit
 And speak and hear amiss of Newman :
 And Hintz is at the head of it—
 Old woman !

I laughed at Newman : what's a laugh ?
 But I admire him none the less : a
 Divinity—eg Regious Calf—
 Professor !

(GHOST laughs long and loud.)

Turning to HINTZ—

Pledge me a pledge, old man, I say,
 Or I will lead you such a dance, sir,
 To Dorchester and back ere day—
 So answer—
 Never to fight with voice or fist,
 Or preach 'gainst Newman—pledge me that, you
 Unchristian greybeard—nor resist
 His statue.

HINTZ. Yes, anything, for I am old and weak :
 It's quite exceptional for me to speak
 Or fight : and as for preaching, why just now
 It doesn't take effect, I don't know how.

*(GHOST drives him away with some contumely, pursues him to Tom
 Gate, where HINTZ falls down.)*

GHOST. Lie there until the porters find you, then
 Go in ; they'll hold their tongues, they're honest men :
 I must be going—I've a breakfast on
 With Doctor Whewell and another don. *[Exit GHOST.*
(Enter the AUTHOR from Heaven knows where.)

AUTHOR (*sings softly*)—

Try tea, Doctor Hintz, try tea,
'Twill soon be successful, trust me :
As the sermons get longer,
The tea must get stronger ;
You'll find it expensive—but still
I'm sure that you'll find that it will
Be cheaper by far
Than advertisements are,
Like this which has ended so ill !

(Turns to go, but comes back.)

Well long live Jowett, long live Gore, and long
Live both Professors who have graced our song !
Long live the 'Varsity and House of Peers,
And last of all long live the Author ! (*Cheers*). [Exit.

CURTAIN.

AD TABITHAM.

Cat,
Twelve years old and old at that,
Shall I sing of thee to-day,
Eh ?

Cat,
Tenant of my lonely mat,
If I did what should I say,
Eh ?

Cat,
As a subject thou art flat ;
Go away and—play ; nay—pray
Stay.

CATULUS.

IN A BLUE BOUDOIR.

After Emilio Montanaro.

IT was one of those hazy heliotrope days in early August—blue boiling August. The sun was just setting, and his rays as they entered the window, bathed one half of my room in

ruby-pink: the other half was by contrast darker—a dull red “darker.” I lay on my sofa wrapt in thought, of what I was thinking I scarcely now remember. I forgot my nature, myself, my very individuality: I became, so to speak, a unit in space. I felt myself the pale protoplasmic centre of a boundless whirling universe of nothing—nothing tangible, nothing visible, and yet there; I felt it, a cold empty chaos.

I woke. Again my thoughts, wandering hazily through most of the secondary and tertiary colours, at last turned to a subdued scarlet theme in the minor key, and were gently modulating to a neapolitan sixth on the sub-dominant, when a tap at my door brought me back again to the commonplace tonic triad.

The sun had now sunk, and under the atmosphere which had turned to a full purple my brain began to feel the faint fragrance of Stephanotis.

* * * *

My voice was almost olive-green as I responded to the knock. “Not that chair, not that,” I trilled as my visitor began to seat himself slowly on a straight backed oak epic. “Try this one, it is an eau-de-Nil ecstasy, a pink sonnet of comfort.”

He reclined.

He was my best friend—perhaps my only friend, and I loved him with a corresponding azure.

I can find no words to express the Prussic blue thrill that shot through me as I took his hand in my hand. (This too in *Oxford* that mockery of the magenta). Yes! I did indeed feel (it was one of my topaz days) that though life was leaden-grey, moments such as these, whose warm harmony broke through the slate coloured crust of ordinary nothingness, and hid its blue-bell pallor (as the chrysalis hides the tender treble of the butterfly) *were* worth the blood-red agony of anticipation. Not all the enharmonic modulations of an Indian twilight could ever hope to express in tint and cadenza, what was passing through my thoughts just then.

* * * *

So we sat till time became the abstract of reality.

* * * *

LOBSTER.

FROM CATULLUS.

DEAR LOVE, if it were mine
To kiss for evermore
With kisses millionfold
Those honeyed eyes of thine ;
I would not have my fill ;
Although the harvest store
Of kisses were untold
As the dry cornstalks, still
I would not have my fill.

AFTER HERRICK : TO MUSIC.

Οὐρανία δέσποιν' ἐκκληγήτειρα μερίμνης,
ἧ τε τίθης Αἰδου δῶμα γαληνὸν αἰεὶ,
ἡμερόεις τελέοντας ἀνορνυμένας τε θνέλλας,
σοῖσιν θελξινόοις ὑπνοδόταισι νόμοις·
κάππεσέ νυν δὲ σὺ, Μοῦσα, κατ' αἰθέρος ἡχίεντος,
ὥς τ' ὧτων κρατέεις τὼς ἐπάειδε φρεσίν.

Y.

CAUSERIES DU VENDREDI.

I.—Whitman and Shelley.

THE two greatest poets that have used the English language since Milton are brought together in our minds this year. Oxford is to rear the tomb of him whom she stoned in the first ardour of his youth, and America has suffered her greatest glory to die in poverty while she hunted through Europe for memorials of the past to grace her Chicago shows. That perfect efflorescence of Senior Oxford, Mr. Arnold, has condemned the one—the Union Orator of poets, Mr. Swinburne, has jumped upon the other.

But they are the truest and greatest poets this century has known. Their poetry is no thin criticism of life. The one died when he was only beginning to understand life—the other, like Shakespere, took all life for his subject, but to feel and love it, not to criticise or expound it in philosophic

choruses or laboured notes. They sang of their own thoughts and passions—Shelley's rare and subtle and evanescent; Whitman's masculine and sensuous and tender. Therefore these poems are as the primal forces of nature—as the music of winds and tides and the colour of flowers and rainbows—not to be understood and explained and classified by a superior Oxford Don.

Browning and Tennyson cannot be set aside as poetasters, but surely they are often only poetizers. They have got some wretched philosophy they want to express, and we feel them straining after it. As every character in Faust comes in ticketed, and we feel that Goethe is working the strings and consciously showing us how wide is his study of life, so in every poem of Browning's we know what doctrine it is he is going to teach us, and we feel painfully aware that it does not come off. The Idylls of the King are a great Christian allegory, and they leave us at the end with the impression that a perfect Christian is a cur, and that Tennyson is a wonderful master of music and word-painting. And as the conscious poetizer must slip, so we find that there is a mass of Wordsworth, and Coleridge, and Tennyson and Browning that is just unmitigated rubbish.

But Whitman and Shelley *never* slip, because they are not poetizers, but seers and singers. You may open where you will, and you will find no effort at poetical effect, but thoughts and emotions that they have really and deeply felt, transfigured by imagination and passion, and clothed in their own music. Whitman is the greater, because his vision is wider and his feelings more akin to the human passions of us all. He has no fears, no scruples. He is not prurient like Mr. Swinburne, but he is as naked and uncovered as the wind-swept heavens. He is no student who has dreamt of life—he has lived, and done and felt. He worships a Trinity—Nature, and Human Nature, and himself. He is more open to the sensuous influences of the grass, of the sea, of "the hiding, receiving night" than Keats could have been. He has touched every human affection—the wife's, the mother's, the friend's—and in his songs of the "Love of Comrades"

has exalted human love to its purest and highest pitch. He has sung of himself, and has found himself in every aspect of everything that moves upon the face of the earth. Mr. Watts has lifted up his ass's hoof against this dead lion. But fancy the writer of costive sonnets to relieve dyspeptic moods—one of the herd of poetasters who croak so dismally in the marshes of our magazines—raising his voice against the singer of—if we must choose one single song—

Vigil strange I kept in the field one night.

There is fire enough in the belly of a five-line poem of Whitman to burn up all the lyrics and sonnets not alone of Mr. Watts' minor poets but of their masters, the Pegasus-thrashing Swinburne, the stained-glass Rossetti, the tutorial Mr. Arnold.

But it is only wronging so great a poet to indicate or to compare him. The great singers are above comparison. Mr. Swinburne and Mr. Arnold contended like gladiators as to who should stand out pre-eminent in poetry when the nineteenth century came to sum up her treasures; and they themselves have shared the fate of all the critics—each has reviled one of the two who alone must stand forth as worthy to sit down beside Homer, and Aeschylus, and Dante and Shakespeare.

HOC SECURIOR.

THE TIPPED.

POSSIBLY half-a-sovereign,
I thought if anything at all.
I did not think it could have been
So small.

It really almost made me laugh;
I bit my lip to keep it down:
Imagine he should give me half-
A-crown!

His nephew and his godchild I—
So fond of him—I hope and pray

This will not make my fondness die
Away.

The worst is, that I had arranged
To take two fellows to the "Pav.":
I only hope their minds they've changed :
I have.

How shall I ever stand their chaff?
An uncle who comes up to town,
And only gives his nephew half-
A-crown !

"My nunks I never met," I'll say ;
And as for the half-crown, we'll see
If it will tea me at an A
B C.

O.T.M.

LES AMERTUMES D'UNE DOUCEUR.

Ou quinze francs, ou rien du tout,
Me disais-je. Certes je ne
M'attendais pas à pareil coup :
Si peu !

C'était à rire et à pleurer—
J'en mordis mes lèvres des dents ;
Ce put-il qu'il m'osât donner
Cinq francs ?

A moi, son neveu son filleul !
J'avais pour lui si grand penchant :
Qu'il reste, je l'espère seul-
-ement !

D'ailleurs, j'allais à la Gaîté
Emmener deux de mes amis.
Eh ! qu'ils aient comme moi changé
D'avis !

Comment souffrir leur raillerie ?
—Le beau cadeau, figurez-vous,
D'oncle provincial, je vous prie ;
Cent sous.

Disons : Il ne s'y trouva pas.—
Quant aux francs maudits, ça vaut mainte
Tasse, chez le traiteur là-bas,
D'absinthe.

Y.

APOLOGIA PRO MUSA NOSTRA.

As some of our readers have misunderstood some of our best verse (and our best verse is very good indeed), we shall perhaps not at once be set down as impertinent if we venture to explain it at some length.

The little poem entitled 'Cabale und Liebe' in our last number was chosen as a target for general witticism and was considered in some circles as a comic poem.

Comedy we need scarcely say is not in our manner at all, and comic verse is only tolerable out of the *Oxford Magazine*.

But to begin.

The thought-fraught line, 'many a mad magenta minute,' tremulous with meaning as it was to not a few, has been criticized as what it was not by the many.

A grammarian on the look out for an opening for fault-finding has quarrelled with our first line. He insists, with some justice on his side, be it allowed, that it should run

'Many mad magenta minutes.'

Now when we come across a fairminded critic like this we have no objection to answer him.

It *was* we confess with a sense of misgiving that in a serious poem such as 'Cabale und Liebe' we ventured to open with a phrase usually confined to the conversation of the frivolous.

But even rhyme has its exigencies; and the gentleman who contributed the third line pointed out to us in a vigorous letter that the use of the plural 'spinets' (mark you, not spinet) would have been fatal to the sense.

It would certainly be difficult to justify the use of such a phrase as

'Keran-Happuch at her spinets.'

In a word, though the expression was peculiar, we determined to lend it our countenance.

But when our fair-minded critic went on to further protest against the facetious character of this exquisite little verse-gem we were forced to point out to him the true nature of his error.

Comic! Yes, the expression passed between us; and we felt very much as if we had noticed Ellen Terry dancing at the Empire, or Professor Huxley's name on the list of contributors to the *Idler*.

But a private expostulation hardly stands with propriety in a public journal? It is high time we offered an emphatic proof of the serious sediment of thought that lurks under such of our 'comic' crystals as 'the olive stanza,' 'the lavender of life,' 'the nicotine extravaganza,' and 'the omelette of the past.'

'A gill of examples,' as should have been wittily said, 'is worth a peck of precept.'

Let us therefore at once select one, the first that comes to hand from the crowded canvas of our recollection. It happens to belong to that much abused class of symbolic subtleties—Life-lavenders.

Here it is.

Once of a Tenor
Whose mouchoir and sentiment
Sent me to heaven
(His scent, I meant,
Sent me to heaven),
When I asked 'How
Old is he now?'
They answered, 'We vow
He's but ten or
Eleven.'

My second example is more difficult to class. In outward form I am inclined to regard it as an 'omelette'—its pathos certainly makes it look far more like a 'curried castaway'—but I believe there are critics who have definitely pronounced

it (and I hesitate to differ from them) one of the finest examples extant of the once scorned nicotine extravaganza.

One noon, moved by a friend's admonishment,
I struck a literary attitude;
When to my own extreme astonishment,
Sub rosa
(Beneath the rose)
Uprose,
Uprose a
PLATITUDE!

Time and type wait for no man, or I should like to have given a few exquisite instances of the harsh-pea-green-remember and the elegiac bureau.

They must be reserved for another occasion.

DOETHE.

**AVE GIVEENE IMPROVISATOR, AUDITURI TE
SALUTANT.**

RUN back, you have some minutes yet
Ere they begin,
And from your common place book get
The jokes, Giveen.

Let me go over all your wit;
Your joke-machine
Has done good service—hasn't it?—
This week, Giveen.

Two puns, a score, a repartee
(Not over clean,
Nor over new it seemed to me)—
What else, Giveen?

Your jokes ring hollow as they fall,
Flat, cracked, and thin;
Like a don's laughter heard in Hall
At grace, Giveen.

O.T.M.

PNEUMATOLAMPADOMASTIX.

(à la Whistler).

AVERAGE DON. A good deal of taste about it—and all of it very bad.

CURT DON. Simply vulgar.

DON (*rather below the average*). Between you and I, I believe that skit was written by a Proctor; or else.....

SLY DON (*a reader of Modern Society*). I shall certainly take it in; but I shall tear off the cover.

YOUNG LORD GUINEABOX. Much, *much*, MUCH worse than the *Isis*, and twice as dear; in fact it is—is—is—is.....
(*Left foaming*).

MR. OSCAR WILDE. The writers are quite unintelligible, and will consequently never be found out.*

MORAL.

MR. GEORGE MEREDITH. Foolish Young Fellows!

* Absit omen!—[ED.].

NOTICES.

THE columns of the *Spirit Lamp* are open to all the talents. We shall be glad to receive contributions in Prose or in Verse. They should be written on *one* side of the paper only, and sent in not later than the *Wednesday before publication*, to

THE EDITOR,

c/o MR. JAMES THORNTON,

HIGH STREET.

The day of issue is FRIDAY every week. MSS. will in no case be returned.

LODGINGS FOR EIGHTS' WEEK AND COMMÉM.

LONGWALL STREET.

No. 1.—Mrs. Clarke. One Bedroom and one Sitting Room, for the Eights' Week or at once.

No. 20.—Mrs. Davis. One Sitting Room and one Bedroom, for Eights' Week and Commemoration.

HOLYWELL STREET.

No. 25.—Mrs. Walker. Four Bedroom and two Sitting Rooms, for Commemoration Week.

No. 38.—Mrs. Miles. Two Sets of Rooms or one Set and three Bedrooms, for Eights' Week, Commemoration or Extension.



The Spirit Lamp.

No. III.

MAY 20, 1892.

THE GATES OF GAZA.

II.

I WAS the guest of the Cénacle one evening about three weeks ago, and had the privilege of meeting half-a-dozen exquisites assembled for artistic conversation in the superb rooms which Sinbad Savage has taken near the Thames Embankment. My invitation (which was fantastically written on *papier de Hollande*) was the first communication I had received from Savage since we left college, where our acquaintance had never got beyond a commonplace bandying of nods and surnames when we met. He wrote—

“DEAR WALTER,—I am delighted to hear through Conrad that you are back in Town. You must join the Cénacle, of course: it is *the* thing in London worth living for. Do come (will you, please?) and meet some beautiful beings on S. Ninian's Eve (next Friday), at Midnight precisely. I simply long to see you again.—Ever, SINBAD SAVAGE.”

The members of the Cénacle take turns to lend their rooms for *réunions*, and the basis of the order in which they do so is not the letters of the alphabet, but the prevailing tint of their apartments; the object being that the atmosphere which surrounds them on these delightful occasions shall preserve a chromatic sequence in certain minor hues varying from mucous grey to poor blood-colour. Orange prevails at Sinbad

Savage's; the walls are hung in pale orange silk; the curtains, the cretonnes, the books on the table, all reflect the same spiritual colour. There is, of course, no gas; there are no pictures, nor ornaments of any kind except some fine Wedgwood plaques and an exiguous cast of Hermaphrodite. Some rare pale incense sends up a refinement of styrax and jonquil and the herb called smoke-raiser, and hides with its vapour the sordid machinery which controls the vehicle of light—a wonderful orange thing in the guise of Selene, attached I suppose to the invisible ceiling.

Savage, a large, almost plethoric man in evening dress, wearing an orange orchid, rose to greet me with acrobatic effusion.

"How good of you to come: let me introduce you to Ion and Bazy. (You would like to know Ion, wouldn't you?)"

I made my bow to two consumptives, the Honourable Ion Lamprady and my Lord Bayswater; refused absinthe, but lit a cigarette heavily opiated, and sat down uncomfortably in a corner.

The conversation, which my entry had interrupted, was speedily resumed; and I listened to it in silence, for I had the very rudiments of their euphuism to acquire. Everyone who knows Sinbad Savage justly regards him as a remarkably brilliant effective talker. His studied rhythm, his racy adverbs, his exotic constructions, his superabundance of epithet, his antitheses *quand même*, are the envy of those who listen, and the despair of those who read.

If his prepositions are ordinary and monotonous, his favourite nouns and phrases are changed regularly once a month. To-day you may marvel at the frequent recurrence of such words as *décadent*, *fin-de-siècliste*, *symbolism*—but be sure by July or so he will have a brand-new assortment of Paris fashions for evening wear. Some epigrammatists have been compared with Thought, stopping to admire herself, on the way to Truth; but for Sinbad Savage, thought is a bore and truth a blunder. Do you think his cleverness easy to catch? It is more complicated than you suppose. First, his epigrams are of two genera: the

raw material may be some well known aphorism which he turns to account as in "A nod is as impertinent as a wink to a blind lord," "All is not old that litters"; or it may be a singular abstract term, as in "the end of action is passivity," "generosity is the distraction of tyrants." There are likewise several methods: the purely verbal method, by a pun or a rhyme; simple negation; simple conversion; the method by definition; the method "*quia impossibile*"; and the *succès de scandale*, which usually accompanies some other, since it is essential to shock someone's convictions by the way.

When I was at the Cénacle, they talked first about morals; and Sinbad Savage showed an acquaintance with the lowest haunts of vice which would have been shocking, only that I know he is really too timid a fellow to risk his skin in "slumming"; and a scorn of religion which would have been terrifying, only that I know he is always in an abject fright about the hereafter. They talked of literature, and proved that nothing more than five years old is worth reading, and that of the last five years' literature, the first four are quite obsolete. Someone talked of Henrik Ibsen. "The man has no style," says Sinbad, "and is quite out of date into the bargain." (And I remember Sinbad was one of the first Englishmen to patronise young Norway! and I know several people who would have been sound Ibsenites by now, if they had not grown tired of hearing him eulogise "The Doll's House".)

It is almost a rule of the Cénacle, that at every meeting a perfectly new author and a perfectly new artist shall be introduced to the notice of the members, and the rivalry this custom gives rise to is inconceivable. There was quite a furious quarrel between Sinbad and Ethelbert Bellamy for the honour of first discovering a great genius whose name I don't feel called upon to disclose.

I went away just as the Cénacle began to discuss music, and the Hon. Ion Lamprady was explaining that "Bark" and "Shoe-bare" were as dead as door-nails.

Here we will leave you, Sinbad Savage. Your friends will be surprised to find you also among the Philistines; and I

can't explain why you are, for I can't define the term. I know what to think of the type of person who sneers at decadence and is afraid of being modern: but you who strive and struggle to be *décadent* because it is in the fashion are a far more despicable Philistine than he. You talk fluently of *névrose* and *migraine*, and you never had a headache; you never felt a genuine passion in your life, and you talk as if you had mastered the secret of the human heart in three lessons. You are not a man with a past, as you pretend; you are not a man with a future, as your friends suppose. You have made a desperate attempt to be epicene, and have ended by losing not only all virility but all humanity. Good-bye, Sinbad Savage: you are a creature of art and water. The art is false, and the water—flat Apollinaris.

Y.

NICOTTEAN ETHICS.

My life is bitter with thy love—thy throat
Is girt about with golden, strange Egyptian words:
Thy white robe binds thee fiercely, and I doat
Upon thy russet eyes, more mild than eyes of birds.

But still they worship not, and as in scorn
Desert thee for thy sister's nuder, nut-brown grace;
Once and again the Idler thro' the Corn
Turns to regard thine ivory wasted face.

Thy sister queens it with a royal zone
That shames the rigour of thy modest gold tattoo;
Her brown form seems begotten out of Stone,
Recalling Jean Peyral's *liaison* with Fatou.

L.C.

SHORT STORIES.—I.

“BOTH SIDES OF THE WALL.”—A Nocturne.

It was in the S.W. of London, towards Pimlico. One dark night in April I was walking late for my amusement through the slums. It was nearly one o'clock; the streets were generally empty; the ginshops had some time since vomited their victims. It was quiet: hardly a sound, except the

irregular sighing of a light wind; now and again some horrible cry, rising vaguely from one or other of the squalid hovels on one side the road: then again silence.

The slum I was in was narrow and long: one side a row of wretched houses with a drink shop every twenty yards. Their windows, some cracked, patched with paper, some broken—all dirty, returned a dull, unmeaning glimmer to the light of the wind-vest gas. On the other side a blind wall. It ran the whole length of the street—high, monotonous, interminable; built of that dead, sordid brown brick of thirty or forty years ago. Within were huge gas-works; but from the street one could see nothing of them—the wall was too high.

I was sauntering slowly, enjoying the night freshness, after a long day's work. I hardly knew how the time was going. Suddenly Big Ben struck one: a single, cold emphasis that made me start and shudder. I listened straining for the echo; hardly certain whether I had heard anything, with no repetition to make sure.

As I stood intent, a few heavy drops of rain fell—the foretaste of relief to the swollen masses of clouds, that drove slowly on from the South West.

At the same time when the vibrations of the stroke of the clock were hardly yet dead, another sound struck my ear. It was near the wall on my right. A rasping sound, as of one scratching the brick. It chilled me to the marrow. The street was as still as death: the windows looked blank and vacant; only the rain grew heavier and heavier. Still the same sound from the inside of the great wall.

I listened, without moving a muscle; every nerve tense and alert.

Still the same sound; steady, regular scraping.

* * * * *

Suddenly a pause. Then the slight ring of metal against the brick. A sigh of relief—then the sound of a brick thrust back into its place. I had my ear to the wall and could hear every least vibration.

Again silence.

Then footsteps—irregular retreating footsteps.

After a minute or two even these died away, and nothing was to be heard but the quiet splashing of the rain.

A quarter past one chimed.

I walked slowly on down the street, nervous and excited.

I felt challenged and baffled by this mystery. What could the noise be? A man?

* * * * *

Suddenly a cat shrieked on the roof of one of the houses on my left. It made me shudder: there is always something horrible, something human, in the cry of a cat at night; but now it struck me as peculiarly dreadful in the dead stillness, and the thrilled electric tension of my nerves.

I quickened my step, being dimly conscious I was exceedingly wet and cold, when I observed a door on my right in the blind gas-works wall. Curiosity was stronger than cold. I stopped; put my ear to the keyhole—there was no handle on the outside.

Not a sound: I strained my hearing till the very silence hummed dizzily in my ears. I pushed the door: it rattled, but it was evidently bolted. I tried to look through the keyhole, but it was as dark as hell. I stared long before I could descry the huge, dim swelling outlines of the meters; that was all.

“There *must* be someone there,” I thought, and again pushed hard against the door till it shook and rattled loudly. Again silence.

I was going away disappointed, when I fancied I caught sound of a footfall. It was certainly a footfall—measured, cautious, stealthy. It approached. Nothing was to be seen through the keyhole. I listened intently.

Suddenly a crash of glass behind me, and a torrent of curses addressed to me from a broken window: gradually the noise faded into a growl, and then ceased.

My heart was beating wildly. Again I put my eye to the keyhole—as I could hear no more footsteps. I could see nothing—not even the gas meters as before. Suddenly it struck me why.

There was a human eye at the other side of the keyhole, half-an-inch from mine. It seemed now to flash like a cat's in the dark: it mesmerized me. I could hear breathing.

* * * * *

How long we stayed so I cannot tell: it seemed long. I felt glued, magnetized to the keyhole, till quite suddenly the ridiculous light of the thing flashed upon me.

I drew back and laughed.

I was answered by a fearful laugh from within the wall which chilled me all up the spine to the roots of my hair. Without thinking twice I turned and fled.

* * * * *

I was pursued. Terrified, I ran for my life—down Horse-ferry Road, through deserted slums, under glaring floods of gaslight, through dim alleys—without knowing whither. I felt I was pursued. Now I could hear his steps gaining on me, coming nearer, nearer.

* * * * *

A door opens—giving flight to a man: he is pursued by three—hounded on by a horrible woman's voice.

The last pursuer tripped me up: I fell prone on the wet pavement.

(To be concluded in our next number.)

ELYSIUM.

LIVING I lacked for much,
Nor knew delight;
Launched by Death's kindly touch
Into the night,
I know all joys of soul, and sense, and sight.

Living, unblest and mean
I sighed a slave;
Death a new life serene,
Ethereal, gave;
All joys of love and light within the grave.

Living, a slave ; but dead
 Gathered to kings :
 E'en life remembered
 New rapture brings :
 Soul, why so long didst fear to take thy wings ?

All hopeless loves which burned
 In me alive,
 Towards which one base and spurned
 Hardly dared strive,
 All the vain visions, fancies fugitive.—

All now I realise,
 Unsated still ;
 Ever new objects rise
 My soul to fill ;
 Ever I strive, and, striving, have my will.

All the great souls I see
 Of long ago,
 Sappho and Helené,
 Homer I know,
 Plato's sweet speech, and Orpheus' lyric flow.

Ah, foolish sons of men,
 Frail leaves, light sand,
 Why will ye tarry then ?
 Why waiting stand ?
 Life is not Life : Life lives in this dear land.

O.T.M.

CAUSERIES DU VENDREDI.

II.—Tennyson and Swinburne.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN has lately been formulating a Pension Scheme. In the absence of the more plethoric charms of three acres and a cow, the labourer and the artizan are being invited to the El Dorado of the Governmental Exchequer to relieve them from the haunting dream of the Union—and the Workhouse.

His critics have replied with considerable force that it is no cheering evangel for the hardy toiler to face superannua-

tion at the age of sixty—and much mental distress would be unquestionably caused by the constant brooding on such a final climacteric for the working man. There is much in all this. But the production of the "*Maid Marion*" and "*The Sisters*" by the above poets cannot but force a conviction on the mind of the more intelligent class of readers that it is indeed a matter for deep regret that there is no such extension of Mr. Chamberlain's main thesis to a Literary Pension Fund—formed by the deduction of some of the profits of their better works by their publishers in order to save the public the perplexed condition of mind that will ask whether the writers are engaged in a farce or a tragedy.

The sight of the veteran superfluous on the stage is never at best a pleasant one, and such a fund would be the welcome means of sparing the reader the sad spectacle of the laureate dropping to the Nadir of fatuity, and Mr. Swinburne engaged in a desperate fight with the bellman, or Mr. Martin Tupper, for the wooden-spoon of poetry—or verse.

Mr. Archer has recently been instructing the public *ex cathedra* on the question "How to write a good play." In these volumes he would find the answer to "how *not* to write it." We regret that the Laureate like the Home Secretary does not fall with the Cabinet, so that a much suffering public could have the opportunity of securing new blood. Mr. Berry, the public executioner, with a proper sense of his position, makes way for others! He feels the strain of office! With a tactful intuition that merits a frank recognition he sees the brilliant days of his executive power are over, and exacting demands for neatness of manipulation, finish, and despatch call for younger men. But the poets go on for ever. With nothing to say they go on saying it, and like women preaching and dogs standing on their hind legs they succeed neither, as Dr. Johnson declared, in doing it well, nor doing it with efficiency for long. They mistake words for ideas.

Were these books published anonymously they would meet with the castigation they merit, and be consigned to the limbo of the forgot. Because they come under the sanction of names, the public is mulcted of shekels, of its patience, and

its time more profitably engaged elsewhere. The Athenians fined their poet Phrynichus for his *Capture of Miletus*. Were some literary Radical in the House to move a reduction in a butt of Malmsey wine, and a fine on the Republican, he would deserve well of his country and of English literature.

It is about time the nation should protect itself and revise its tariff. The time surely has come when placid verbiage and eleuthero-maniac rant should no longer pass for poetry. Mr. Weller declined mild potations by his belief that by addiction to such the toper got no "for'arder":—after many years the public can only see constant decline of power in the writer of "*In Memoriam*"; and in the multitudinous ocean of verbiage and sound, of obscenity and imageless froth poured forth by the author of *Atalanta in Calydon*, the reader will detect no advance in taste, form, or power. Neither Settle, nor Shadwell nor any other of the laureates that ever inside the Dunciad or outside Bedlam "deviated into sense" would have viewed with equanimity these volumes three-fourths of which are below *Tit-Bits* or the *Quiver*. If Mr. Tennyson has desired to show the marvellous genius of Sir Walter Scott in bold relief against his own tinsel and twaddle, and Mr. Swinburne to atone for his former obscenity by a relapse into the bathos of dulness and absurdity, they have succeeded. Other aim they can hardly have had, or be said with any truth to have attained.

VIRTUTE CRESCO.

BACCARESA STOPPER.

AH! I was but a stripling when
 I came in love my earliest cropper;
 My earliest, fondest flame was then
 The lovely Baccaresa Stopper.

Her father was a bold bargee,
 His arms like iron, his face like copper;
 But oh! the pearl of maids was she,
 The peerless Baccarcsa Stopper!

A cruel tyrant was her sire,
And grimly swore that he would whop her,
And whop me too, should I aspire
To flirt with Baccaresa Stopper.

Marriage, thought I, for all atones,
And marriage shall make all things proper :
She shall be Baccaresa Jones
Instead of Baccaresa Stopper.

Yet dared I not that question pop,
So all-important to the popper ;
And still alone I keep the shop—
She still is Baccaresa Stopper.

My father, learning of my flame,
Sternly commanded me to drop her ;
And oh ! I could not but obey 'm,
And give up Baccaresa Stopper.

I waited, fearing to be told
To go to Jericho or Joppa—
Remorseless fate ! how I was sold :
I lost my Baccaresa Stopper.

Whene'er I look upon the Thames,
Or see a barge, I sigh and drop a
Regretful tear, my gem of gems,
For thee, my Baccaresa Stopper !

Yes, I was but a stripling when
I came in love my earliest cropper,
And 'neath the shadow of Big Ben
Courtied Miss Baccaresa Stopper.

O.T.M.

SAIONARA.

CARVE me a kiss on stone,
Paint me a sound on silk,
Mould me a marble groan :
Pour me a glass of milk.

Lap me in tears of oil,
 Wring but my heart with jet,
 Festoon me with a foil,
 Solace me with a net.

String but thy heart on mine,
 Bite but thy nail in love,
 Sing to me but of swine,
 Or dust me as a dove !

Cool but thine icy brow,
 Curl but thy tender nose—
 And I will churn a vow
 That shall curtail the rose !

L.C.

A DEMI-SEMI-QUAVER ON THE UNIQUE.

EARLY this morning, while I was mechanically fluttering “*Mon Frère Yves*” over a hurried cutlet, it fell open at the chapter which runs as follows:—

xxxvii.

“*Deux mois plus tard, quand cette Ariane fut prête à partir, le sort voulut que je fusse désigné, moi aussi, à la dernière heure, pour faire partie de son état major.*”

I now feel that at last, after many fretful struggles, after many fatuous efforts, the great object of my life is attained—my collection of curios is complete, my uniques really unique.

The shortest chapter in any living or dead author !

* * * * *

And now let me explain what I mean by the word.

The unique (the unique, be it understood, not the uniquely unique) is at once so common and so impossible that to discover it (for the third or fourth time) always gives rise to disappointment.

The tyro, going forth Quixote-like, with an idea of finding it, stands self-condemned. It is as one were to seek the Snark or—the moralities of Oxford on a Sunday.

But yet, just because he is a tyro, he will smile an angel smile to his papercutter. He will smile, I repeat, and fiercely whisper the magic formula, "The oldest clergyman in the Church of England."

Happy fatuity! graceful ignorance! *simplicitas sancta! sancta simplicitas!*

That ingenuous boy, that perfervid youth, that enthusiastic man, *has been reading the Church papers.*

I have dabbled in elementary psychology with some success, and *I know* that man has been reading the Church papers.

Yes! He or she has learnt from the *Churchman* or *Church-woman* of last week the happy news that the Rev. Thomas Thomas Spedewell Burne-Browne is the oldest clergyman extant in the Church of England.

But he (or she) has *not* read to-day's issue of this pair of journals.

In both of them they would have noticed, as I had the pleasure of noticing (for "The Zebra") that Mr. S. B. Browne had had the misfortune to be born exactly three hours after Mr. Percy Reginald à-Carte Dalia, and that consequently the oldest clergyman in the Church of England had, so to speak, ceased to exist. In a word, he *is* unique, but no longer uniquely so. But let us descend for a moment from the ridiculous to the sublime, let us leave the ages of Clergymen and proceed to the ages of Art. —

The great masters, the great old masters, what I might perhaps felicitously call the *schoolmasters* of—of—of—the *best* period are notoriously not unique. The pictures of Van Dyck (it is difficult to stomach the ignorance of those ignorami who forsooth write his name with a yke) and of Rubens, for instance, seem painted with especial view to the deception of the dealer in uniques. All their masterpieces resemble each other exactly, and the difficulty is not only to distinguish their originals from their own copies of the originals, but also to distinguish their copies from their own originals of their copies.

And as with the painter in paint, so with the painter in prose.

Lord Beaconsfield, with his usual imaginative, tinsel idealization of the commonplace, happily described, or dined out and described, the hansom cab as the gondola of London.

We all know the quotation, and I with the tyro treasured it for a long time among my collection of uniques. Only a few days ago, however, I came across precisely the same idea somewhat differently expressed in Heine's Nordsee:—

Die Badekutschen, die Droschken der Nordsee.

I was horrified, and at once withdrew the gondola of London from my cabinet of quotations, one of the largest I possess, and the contents of which, I regret to say, have been stolen from time to time.

Very few undergraduates, I believe, collect chapters, although I am afraid a good many chapters collect undergraduates.

However that may be, and it seems to be pretty bad, I shall place the little chapter that heads this article in a silver vase on my mantelpiece after labelling it “uniquely unique in point of length.” If my discovery only induces a thirst among my readers for the undiscoverable—the story without an end—I shall sleep in happiness to-night.

FINIS.

LATER.—On the point of bed my foot slipped on the Heine I had been reading.

It opened at the 12th chapter of his book of Ideas, which I here transcribe:—

“Die deutschen Censoren

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

. Dummköpfe

.”

I had lost one unique to find another. It seems the very gem of chapters, the very marrow of literature, the UNIQUE

OF THE UNIQUE. Would it, would it, I wonder, have been more purely *true* if the *second* word had been but two syllables longer?

* * * * *

I wonder, would oxfordisch——?

L. C.

OF SCULLS AND NUMSKULLS.

SPECULATING upon the boredoms of the coming race, and whether I should go and see it or stay at home until the tyranny were overpast, I fell the other day to tracing the moral and natural history of the athlete in general and the rowing man in particular; when my reflexions begot some such conclusions as these.

First, that athletics are absolute, and athleticism at its zenith. I have heard of a time when to be able to run and leap with vigour and success was no rare accomplishment; when a man might translate Aristotle and yet ride to hounds once a fortnight; or row in the 'Varsity Eight and yet spell his name correctly; when the body rose voluntarily from the easy chair, and the soul, not unfrequently, above the *transtra*. Then came competition, and choked up all things; permanently severed the brain and the body, subjected either to continual coaching and cramming, and forced every man to choose between the two. It is some years since the great battle was fought which established the right of the individual to physical torpor, and since then the athlete has gathered unto his own thews the accumulated muscle of the nations; and the unused intellectual capital of the athlete has gone to supply the wasted brain-tissues of the bookworm. Lately a reaction has set in. The effete has fallen down and worshipped the full-blooded: strong men and strong women, acrobats, prize-fighters, have been the lions of the sapless herd; and while few can be athletic in their own persons, the whole world, it seems, is gone a-sighing after the lost instinct of primal brutality.

Second, that a wholesome chapter might well be written upon the involution of the rowing-man, in whom matter has finally triumphed over mind. Once he was pliant and of a natural height and modest biceps; he was affable, he was not turbulent; he could talk good lay talk on occasion: now is he become noisy and tyrannous; his brain is completely lignified, so that it cannot think; he talks only of weights, of whiffs, of torpids; if you say in his presence a thing that he does not agree with, it is ten to one he will not apprehend you; or if he do, he will have no patience to hear; or if he be converted, he will still outwardly say the same. Rightly, rightly is he called an Oar: now is he a thing of wood, long, straight, obdurate, tyrannous.

Musing whereon, I fell asleep and dreamt.

* * * * *

“Now here,” said the gravedigger sadly, “here’s part of a scull hath lain you i’ th’ ground these three-and-twenty years.” We were on the banks of the Cherwell, where they have made a cemetery of late. It was a curious thing the fellow showed me—a long, thin piece of wood, apparently; but as he held it in his hand it crumbled to dust, and I found myself wondering whether it was the remains of some ancient magatherium I had looked on, of some monster of the pleiocene period, or of that latter-day great beast, the Thicksetoarus.

Σκύλαξ.

NOTICES.

THE columns of the *Spirit Lamp* are open to all the talents. We shall be glad to receive contributions in Prose or in Verse. They should be written on *one* side of the paper only, and sent in not later than the *Wednesday before publication*, to

THE EDITOR,

c/o MR. JAMES THORNTON,

HIGH STREET.

The day of issue is FRIDAY every week. MSS. will in no case be returned.



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THE GATES OF GAZA.

III.

THE religion of Philestia is understood to be a monotheism of a very elastic character. The images of the great god Dagon, which are worshipped all over the country, shew a wonderful diversity of feature and expression, which has made him attractive to the most different sorts of people; and converted so many of the Gentiles that the prestige of the resident priesthood is eclipsed by the splendid career now open to enterprising young missionaries in foreign lands; who are grown too important to be passed over in a treatise on Philistia, and far too insidious not to deserve exposure.

The very shibboleth of this sort of proselytizers is a sound discussion. While our only desire in argument is to improve either our opinions or our dialectic, the Philistine will always argue with a moral purpose. Argument for argument's sake he cannot understand. Such rational motives as the display of ability or the bracing of the intellect by a vigorous contest, he heartily despises. He is not ashamed of avowing that his aim is to convert you. He sees no other advantage in a difference of opinion, than the opportunity of making you finally of one mind with him. He discovers in a keen adversary no subtle debater, no sincere votary of another god—only a possible proselyte. He cannot bear to leave

you where you are—not because he is anxious about your state, but because he is afraid of missing a good chance—of neglecting the special mission to reform you which he feels has been entrusted to him. In short, the ruling passion of his class is the love of instruction.

The Instructive Philistine has, broadly speaking, two types, which we shall call, if you please, the Kindergarten Philistine and the Aristocrat with a Mission.

To take the latter species first: its growth is due to a reaction against constitutional oligarchy. Divine right and so forth being popularly discredited, the oligarch, with the monarch, became a convenient puppet, reduced to supporting his dignity with a shallow adoption of new principles, and an “I myself will be your leader” for a motto. Who has forgotten the citizen peer who flourished in University debating societies half a century ago—who passed self-denying ordinances, and suffered from a moral poor man’s gout? The miniature Mirabeau is gone; and instead we have a type of oligarch who substitutes a personal mission for divine right as his claim on the consideration of mankind.

I know a nobleman, an admirable person in many ways, who might have been saved from this dreadful superstition if he had not been haunted by the image of the German Emperor. But at an early age he was so unfortunate as to discover a preaching likeness, as it seemed, between William of Hohenzollern and William, second Marquess of Admonisham; and this likeness he has ever since felt bound to live up to. It may be frankly acknowledged that so far Admonisham has been very successful. No one who knows the peer can read the speeches of the monarch without fancying himself for a moment in a college Discussion Society; no German subject could read a translation of Admonisham’s address upon the Gallant and the Glorious without recalling the elevating discourses of the Elector of Brandenburg on the deck of the “Hohenzollern.” With the great man of S. Boniface, as with the great man of Potsdam, there is the same determination to bring retrogression up to date—to stem the tide of new ideas by getting well in advance of

them—to convince the world of their plenipotentary inspiration, and in order to that end to spare no effort, however painful, to take no advice, however profitable, and to be repelled by no flattery, however grovelling. The means employed by either, indeed, are as different as their respective spheres of activity: the one patronises socialism, the other pats Browning on the back; the one bowdlerises Ibsen for the mission-room, the other teaches the epic of modern history to the young recruit; the one takes up the Imperial Navy, the other takes up the Oxford rowing-men. But the essential characteristics are the same. Both seem (as sentimental police-reports say of culprits in the dock) to feel their position very keenly; both take an insatiable interest in other people's affairs; both are fond of public speaking, and invariably run away with their tongues; both are restlessly, abnormally active. Admonisham, it must be owned, is a long way behind his model in point of energy. When a chancellor is dismissed at Berlin, he must be content with advertising for a new amanuensis; when the Emperor starts on one of those hurried tours by which he has deified commercial travelling, the young lord can only hasten from meeting to meeting, and pose as the paragon platform-preacher and complete committee-man. The disadvantages of civilian dress too deter him from displaying too much zeal. His majesty, in the uniform of an English Admiral of the Fleet, may affright the heavens with the thunder of his decrees: but how could Admonisham speak loudly and preserve the unruffled exterior of the *artiste en coiffure*?

I often wonder whether he has been as successful in fulfilling his mission as he has been in moulding himself on the Berlin pattern. He has made a few enemies, as what earnest reformer has not? and he has made a great many friends and converts. Has Dagon gained, or Lord Admonisham or Messrs. Day and Martin, by the collusion between those who delight to lick his boots and those who seek to tread upon his corns? His enemies will tell you that they object to the lay confessional he is bent on establishing, and to the

flattering *εἰσωνεία* with which he is continually waiving his rights and titles in their faces. They call his eloquence glibness, his candour bad taste, his self-respect oppressive. But his friends believe in him. He is their confessor, their instructor, their friend, from whom they can keep no one's secrets. They will eat with him, drink with him, pray with him, read with him, and reform the world with him, till he goes down.

But enough of the Aristocrat with a Mission: it is time we considered the type, Kindergarten Philistine, of which Mr. Thomas Rudiment is so admirable a specimen.

Y.

MORTE D'AMOUR.

Fond love is dead, and we, too sad to weep,
 Must bear him gently to his resting place
 Beside the moaning music of the deep
 That stills its thunders for a little space,
 While on the sacred ground
 We turn without a sound
 To print our farewell kisses on his face.

Bind him with lilies, for his soul is white,
 Gird him with roses, for his flames are red,
 Crown him with marigolds for his delight,
 Nor scorn the tenderer blossoms that have shed
 Their little lives to pave
 The pathway to his grave,
 Content—nay, glad—to die since he is dead.

We too would gladly die—at last with him
 To rest together, joining hand with hand;
 Together pluck the poppies thro' the dim
 Wide poppy-gardens of death's sunless land,
 Together learn to live
 The life death hath to give;
 And love could make us learn to understand.

Yet life remains; and still the moaning shore
Is gray with doubt and sorrowful with mist,
Since cruel fate hath chilled for evermore
The fervour of the warm red lips we kissed;
Since cruel fate hath filled
His heart with scorn, and stilled
The music of the master-lutanist.

G.

SHORT STORIES.—I.

“**BOTH SIDES OF THE WALL.**”—A Nocturne.

CHAPTER II.

When I got up dazed and dirty from the ground, not a soul was to be seen in the street. My pursuer had disappeared, whither I knew not.

I was bruised and sore as well as horribly mired; altogether it struck me that this had turned out a disagreeable adventure, and I went home tired and disgusted. Morning found me in a different mind: all that had happened in the night seemed unreal, a bad dream. But still my curiosity was as strong as ever; I burned to discover who was my mysterious pursuer; and what was the strange secret of the gas-works.

I went there again early in the afternoon. The place was gloomy even by daylight: little sunshine ever reached the narrow slum. There were groups of squalid children playing in the mud; their welcome to a stranger was not always flattering or desirable. I went up to the door where I had listened and peeped last night, and on knocking loudly was soon admitted by a tall young workman, fairhaired and pleasant-looking.

“I should like very much to see over the works; may I?”

“Will you step this way, sir?”

I complied, and followed him towards a shed where several more were sitting at lunch, eating bread and bacon.

My guide went up to one who sat in a dark corner, spoke a few words in his ear, and then returned to me saying—

"I'm afraid I can't shew you over, myself, sir; but here's Tom Maccles who'll do it. He's rather queer, but he knows all about it."

Maccles did not at first move, but stayed in his dark corner, staring at me. I felt instinctively that his was the eye of the man who chased me last night; and I saw that he knew me.

Presently he came forward, and walked out; I followed, hearing as I left, sounds of whispering and laughter among the remaining workmen.

My guide walked before me in dead silence; he led me all round the works without uttering a syllable; and I did not care to be the first to speak.

We came back to the shed to find it empty; all the men were gone about their business. We sat down—still silent.

I suppose we remained ten minutes without a word.

Every now and then Maccles stared at me with his cold eye: I felt his glance penetrate. Presently his fingers began to twitch convulsively. He stood up, took a small rough bit of iron from his waistcoat pocket, and began to scratch the wall.

That sound made me shiver.

He scraped and worked for some little time, as if unconscious of my presence. After a while one brick was loosened, and he pulled it out with his fingers. Another followed. Then from the cavity in the wall he drew out a knife, very bright, with a blade some eight inches long.

He struck it against the wall till it sang like a tuning fork. Then he replaced the bricks, and handed me the knife, breaking the long silence with—

"Take this: keep it for me till six o'clock this evening."

I could not disobey: his eye defied refusal. I took it, put it in my coat; and rose to go. He accompanied me to the door, and let me out with a whisper—

"Six o'clock this evening."

I went out perplexed and dumb, and was half way down the street when he caught me up and, with a wild look

round to see if he was observed, hissed in my ear—"Claud Wilson is watchman to-night."

The mud-larking urchins in the street stared in wonder, but no one else was passing down that way.

* * * * *

With an uneasy conscience I presented myself a little before six.

I had examined the knife, and found nothing very remarkable in it; it seemed to be of fine steel and was very sharp.

The same fair-haired, tall, young man with the pleasant expression let me in. I asked for Tom Maccles.

"He's still at work; I have finished," he added, explaining, "I am watchman to-night."

"Oh," said I, "you are Claud Wilson."

"Yes," he answered with some surprise.

Six o'clock struck; the workmen began to stream away homewards. Maccles, Wilson and I were left.

"Good night," said Maccles to the other, and turned to go.

"Good night," answered Wilson with an ironical tinge in his voice, and a slight twitching of the upper lip.

We left him alone, and heard the door bolted behind us.

It was growing dusk; the streets were wrapped in dense, choking fog, through which the gas gleamed red and faint.

"Give me the knife."

I obeyed.

We walked on in silence; where we were I knew not. Small, narrow, foul slums; a good many people dimly seen in the thick veil; now and then hawkers' carts crawling homewards.

We stopped at a small hovel: Maccles knocked, a handsome woman opened the door—tall, with fine grey eyes; dressed in tawdry and vicious squalor.

"O it's you," she said. Her voice was wonderfully sweet and soft; almost unnatural.

Maccles made no reply, but turning to me said, "Wait here a minute," and then went in and shut the door behind him.

In about five minutes he reappeared, and we started back again. I noticed the name of the street as we turned out of it—Carter's Row.

We threaded a maze of undistinguishable slums, walking leisurely.

"Well?"

"What?" said I.

"That was my wife. What do you think of my wife?"

I did not know what to say, but he continued: "Pretty voice, isn't it? Listen how well I can imitate it!" and he mockingly said, "O, it's you," in exactly the woman's tone—with a grim laugh at the end.

"Not bad, is it?"

"Wonderfully like," I assented.

Not another word was said till we got back again to the gasworks street.

It was seven o'clock and the gin-shops were beginning to fill.

We reached the door in the wall. Maccles put his ear to the keyhole and listened.

"All right" he whispered to me. I could hear Wilson's regular tread as he paced up and down.

The fog was pitchy.

Presently Maccles put his mouth to the keyhole and said in his wife's soft voice—

"Claud!" No answer: the footfalls drew nearer.

"Claud!" The horrible falsetto made me shudder.

"Yes, dear," in a low voice from within.

"Open—don't be seen."

"No fear of being seen to-night—in this fog."

"Do be careful."

"All right."

A bolt was quietly drawn: then the footsteps retreated.

Maccles looked round with a grin: you could not see a yard before your face.

"Walk ten paces that way, then stop and listen." I obeyed, trembling from head to feet.

The moment my back was turned, I heard the door open ; I looked back and saw him disappear, and heard the bolt shot.

Steps, steps, moving towards the shed on the inside.

Dead silence. I strained every nerve to hear, but in vain.

* * * * *

Faint whistling from inside ; it grew louder ; strong, cheerful whistling.

Then a sudden ring of metal on the pavement beside me ; and I picked up Maccles' knife. There was blood on it.

Again steps ; he was running to the door. He opened it and paused on the outside. Then I heard him approaching at full speed.

Half mad myself with fear, I fled from him.

Again a horrible race through the fog ; how he could follow me I do not know ; his sight must have been supernatural. I was getting into more crowded thoroughfares, but I never stopped : on, on through slum, and alley and street ; blindly, madly on.

Suddenly I thought I heard cries and tumult behind me ; sounds of scuffle. I made one last effort and fell down fainting.

* * * * *

I awoke stiff and cold ; but with calmed brain. I heard the newsboys shouting — “ *Star, Special ! Double Murder in Westminster !* ”

Was I an accomplice ?

Περὶ φροῦδων — NIL NISI BONUM.

“ Defrudamur ; ” ait Clio, “ non ille Professor

Dignus, qui proprio nomine *Φροῦδος* erit.”

Altera mox Musæ placuit sententia doctæ ;

“ Sic hominem tolero, sit modo *Φροῦδος* ” ait.

Φ.

OUR ADVERTISEMENTS.

(See last week's *Isis*, *passim*.)

Dear *Isis*, you're hard up for matter,
And we're not quite famous enough;
It's a bargain; you beat us to batter,
And we get an excellent puff.

CAUSERIES DU VENDREDI.**No. III.—Whitman.**

THE basis of Whitman's genius is a rich, all-embracing, utterly outspoken sensuousness. In the fearlessness with which he sets aside sentiment—the prevailing note of Christian poetry—and goes forth sensuously to enjoy Nature and Life, he carries us back to the Elizabethans, and from the Elizabethans again to the Pagan Greeks. But his sensuousness is as healthy as the wind of heaven. It is not hectic with feverous and illicit passion like much of Webster and Ford, nor simply prurient as so often is the case in the classics, nor yet is it the innocent unawakened sensuousness of primitive poetry. It is the joyous, optimistic expression of a large nature frankly accepting all that is—refusing to be held back by sentiment or tradition from taking its fill of delight in all that on any side can appeal to the sense of beauty.

Every experience is for him primarily a delight of the senses, whatever further appeal it may then make to mind and heart. External Nature and the Beauty of the Human Body do not appeal to him in one way; Love, Friendship, Sorrow and Death in another. There is no contrariety in these things—the Flesh does not strive against the Spirit, nor the Spirit against the flesh. In the early buoyant poems, the “Song of Myself,” “Salut au Monde,” “Song of the Open Road,” “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry,” all the pictures he passes before him of different scenes, and the doings and thoughts of different men in all the world, even the visions of the universe beyond and the dim guesses at the ultimate meaning of

things are a careless optimistic rapture of the senses. He finds the same rich pleasure in all these things as Keats found in the fields of autumn or the song of the nightingale. In fact on this side of his genius Whitman is wonderfully akin to Keats. No bird since Keats' Nightingale has sung so rich and marvellous a strain as the thrush that sang to Whitman of the mystery and beauty of death. As the song of Keats' nightingale comes to us with the rich scents of—

“White hawthorn and the pastoral eglantine,
Fast fading violets covered up in leaves
And Mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves,”

So Whitman's thrush pours out its notes amid the heavy scent of lilacs, under the still light of the stars.

“Sing on, sing on you grey-brown bird,
Sing from the swamps, the recesses, pour your chant from the
bushes,
Limitless out of the dusk, out of the cedars and pines.
O liquid and free and tender !
O wild and loose to my soul—O wondrous singer !
You only I hear—yet the star holds me (but will soon depart)
Yet the lilac with mastering odour holds me.

* * * * *

Then with the knowledge of death as walking one side of me,
And the thought of death close walking the other side of me,
And I in the middle as with companions, and as holding the hands
of companions.

I fled forth to the hiding receiving night that talks not,
Down to the shores of the water, the path by the swamp in the
dimness,

To the solemn shadowy cedars and the ghostly pines so still.

And the singer so shy to the rest received me,
The grey-brown bird I know receiv'd us comrades three.
And he sang the carol of death, and a verse for him I love.

From deep secluded recesses,
From fragrant cedars and the ghostly pines so still
Came the carol of the bird."

But whether Keats could ever have passed beyond this buoyant delight of the senses to master the deeper and sterner experiences of life and draw from them too the same subtle soul of beauty we shall never know. In almost the last that we see of him the contentedness of his spirit is broken by disease and the first touch of passion; yet when *Severn* lifted him up to die that had passed, and his soul had gained a manliness which with life might have given us poetry as warm with human passion as what he has left is with love of form and colour. Whitman certainly has been tried and not found wanting. His wider human sympathy was more ready for such growth, and in the real and terrible experiences of the war it found the needed conditions. An optimistic content with all things seems hardly compatible with strong affections and deep feelings, since over these the wheel of fate must ever drive so ruthlessly. Yet in the "*Drum Taps*" we have poems of so profound feeling and sympathy that they can hardly be read without tears—the anguish of the torn and the mangled, the despair of widowed mourners, and withal an unshaken spirit not merely of hope for the future but of contentment with what is. Nor is it the optimism of Mr. Browning acquired by shutting your eyes to facts and shouting aloud some comforting solution of mysteries unsolvable; it is almost the optimism of divine vision — of one who bearing on his own shoulders all the sin and suffering around him can yet by very reason of that all comprehending sympathy feel in an unspeakable way that it is well.

"Look down fair moon and bathe this scene
Pour softly down night's nimbus floods on faces ghastly, swollen,
purple,
On the dead on their backs with arms tossed wide,
Pour down your unstinted nimbus, sacred moon."

HOC SECURIOR.

Τέκνων ἐξένοσις.

To live not many I allow
Of all the offspring of my pen,
And I review them every now
And then ;

And purge one here, and prune one there,
And read them yet another time
Correcting (if I can and dare),
A rhyme.

About the fortieth reading through
You can't imagine how they pall ;
You wish they ne'er belonged to you
At all.

Like David in your haste you say
" All men are liars, all verse is trash,"
And haste to burn them while you may,
Being rash.

Be calm for a few minutes, then
Paternity will reassert
Its claim ; you will not do them an-
-y hurt.

One sonnet choice, one favoured scroll,
One savoury jape, you can't let go ;
Back they creep into the portfol-
-io.

And so the pet half-dozen things
Are kept to be read o'er anew,
With a sigh that the slow muse brings
So few.

But what of you my new-born babe,
Say, shall you be preserved or no ?
See now I lay you on the tab-
-le so,

And judge you. Now there is no doubt
 Offensive babies ought to be
 Exposed on hills, or else left out
 At sea.

What are your merits? You are flat
 As three-days-opened ginger beer,
 A most unentertaining brat,
 D'you hear?

Still tho' its undeserv'd God knows,
 You shall be kept a day or two;
 The second reading will dispose
 Of you! O. T. M.

LADY D'ESCARVILLE'S LETTERS TO HER SON.

Telegrams: Barsing.

The Purlieus,
 WRINKLESHAM.
 Thursday.

My darling Boy,

You tell me in your last letter—*do* write oftener—that the food in Hall is bad. How can this be when you pay so much? Shall I write to your tutor about it? What you say about your luncheons horrifies me. You *must* have green vegetables, and plenty of them. Now manage this, and if you can't, a small *douceur* to the chef—you know what I mean.

And then about wine.

Take a little, only a little always at lunch, a glass or two at dinner, and none afterwards.

And don't, there's a dear boy, smoke too many horrid cigars; you know you are not strong, and everybody—why even Sir Simon Green says so—says it's fearful for the liver.

What a nuisance the scouts seem. Could you not get them both another place on another staircase? Dr. Fitz-

fudle, the Warden of Claremont, was a first cousin of my mother's, and I am sure he would manage this for me—

If not I really must come up to Oxford and see your master about it.

It is really too preposterous!

Fancy sweetbreads too; and a lunch for eight going to feed some horrid middle-class woman, probably no better than she ought to be!

Of course it's all very well to look after the scouts, and see that their rooms are properly aired, and that they go to church regularly, but when it comes to entirely taking all that good food for themselves——

Its terrible, simply terrible!

About calling now. I'm sure you won't know many other young men yet, so you really ought to call on Lady Togood. It is a delightful house to stop at, and though she does wear dreadfully second-rate bonnets, they are very good people and know everybody.

Cultivate women—you can always get to know plenty of nice young men, but you will never get on unless you know women.

Are you in the boating set or the College Eight?

Athletics is a great thing, and so many people have taken it up lately that it looks quite dowdy not to know something about it.

Don't get bloated of course, or box, or anything of that sort; and don't, don't, don't drink iced things when you come in hot.

The Dean of Lattardey was here only yesterday, and told the most fearful story about a boy he knew who got a dreadful illness and lost an appointment—something in the War Office—with an unpronounceable name, simply from taking one glass of Moselle cup after tennis.

He is now a perfect skeleton and has to be wheeled about in a bath chair.

Your connection with the new paper the *Spirit Lamp* pleases me, though I should not get too literary, as people

always think you are a radical or a bohemian or something dreadful of that sort.

I am sorry to hear you were gated. What is it? and was it done publicly?

How unpleasant about Mr. Froude! I have had that kind of trouble myself with a butler.

Your loving Mother,

CLARA D'ESCARVILLE.

I am thinking about your paper. You know your poor dear uncle left some Greek translations from Marshall, I think it was, and I have no doubt in the world that Cicely would let you have them. Do be careful about *everything*.

NOTICES.

THE columns of the *Spirit Lamp* are open to all the talents. We shall be glad to receive contributions in Prose or in Verse. They should be written on *one* side of the paper only, and sent in not later than the *Wednesday before publication*, to

THE EDITOR,

c/o MR. JAMES THORNTON,

HIGH STREET.

The day of issue is FRIDAY every week. MSS. will in no case be returned.



The Spirit Lamp.

No. V.

JUNE 3, 1892.

THE HUMOURS OF DRYASDUST.

"MR. PITT," said the wits at Brooks', "rises at nine. The first thing he does is to eat no breakfast." When Jones rises I know not, but since he has nought to say I would he would say it. Instead thereof Jones says much. He has been by turns our last new poet, essayist, critic, wit. He scorns mere recorders of facts, Dryasdust and his clan. He cuts me now, for in a frank moment I confessed a preference for Dryasdust. Treat Dryasdust aright and you shall find him inaptly named, all humour at the core, liquescent wisdom, a flood, a deluge. What melts him is—save the mark!—scissors. Cut him therewith and note the liquefactions. "He was raised to the peerage in 1618, but died the same year." Beside this, of what worth is Jones' Essay on Death in its black cover with lettering of gold, hues symbolic of departure and return, the seed and the springing plant? Here in the fulness of brevity is the theme of a hundred poets, a thousand moralists. "There is no armour against fate," sang Shirley. "What shadows we are," cried Burke, "and what shadows we pursue." Jones fills a volume with the theme, the certainty of the end and the vanity of prophylactics; yet how empty his clumsy amplifications, labyrinthine similes, polycephalous sermons, beside the weird monosyllable, the pregnant conjunction, of our Dryasdust.

Here is another liquefaction. "Amongst his other honours he was a Knight of the Garter." When Jones can reach this satiric touch I will accord him my admiration. Figure you, I pray, this nobleman, as he sits surrounded by his honours, shadowy creatures whom he deems his slaves and finds his masters. He is a Knight of the Garter, but only so long as he abides among his other honours. He were fain to quit him of burdensome honours, to be no more sheriff, justice of peace, or coram, and yet write him eq. aur. in any bill, warrant, quittance, or obligation. Yet this too vanishes with the others. Those quit of, the garter grows thin on his shank, the star pale on his breast. Scarce may he be armigero, scarce have hatchment over his tomb. Could Jones express so much in so little?

"His son," says Dryasdust, "was educated at Eton and took his degree at Cambridge." Volumes have been written on that University, and Dryasdust gives them all in one crisp contrast. Ah, Jones, Jones, you also took your degree at Cambridge; but, for the place of your education, it is a mystery that no man has solved, a riddle unanswered, a maze untracked, a secret undiscovered, a puzzle and a dubitation for ever.

AD ISIDEM.

ONE point the *Isis* has, it must be said:
 First thirteen days of hope that it is dead;
 One fourteenth day of disappointment, then
 The thirteen days of hope begin again. J.

A FILLIP FOR FELICIA.

"INFINITELY sweet, elegant and tender," said Lord Jeffrey of Mrs. Hemans' poems; why did the learned and gallant reviewer add the cruel qualification "it may not be the highest poetry"? Not the highest poetry! What higher poetry is possible, we should like to know, than the fluent exhortations to patriotism, the fragrant praises of an unruffled morality, the eloquent mastery of italics which adorn,

may which constitute the work of the Sappho of the nineteenth century? Not the highest poetry! Must Dr. Watts then still be first? But indisputably the second place must be given to the author of such beautiful, rustling, black-silk, sabbatical verse as that of Felicia Hemans.

Felicia! the very word is as a bell (a dressing-bell, or a muffin-bell) to toll me back from her verse to herself. There is hardly more poetry in all her seven volumes than lies in her name; it is fraught with fragrant meaning; the very sound of it suggests all that is delicious and felicitous. The wit of man could have devised no more appropriate name for the author of the "*Homes of England*."

It is in the cruel nature of things that of a writer so voluminous (a writer who, so to speak, names her first production *Gad*), much must perish in oblivion; in fact of the seven volumes of Mrs. Felicia she will be lucky if seven pieces survive. But some there are which we cannot suppose the world will easily let die; some that will live as long as the parlour table remains an institution.

Of course the carping critic will object that it is poetry only for one time, that it is out of date. Shallow and captious objection! No; Mrs. Hemans freely divulged the secret of her art; she left a precious legacy of her method—not a set of rules, a body of canons baldly stated, but a principle, a formula incorporated in all her writings; it may be applied to any theme, to any circumstances. Give her what subject you will, and you know exactly how she will treat it; the hemanizing influence of versified commonplace is the same whatever its object may be. In other words you may always bring her up to date, with a moral certainty that you are doing her no injustice; you always are sure what she would have said.

Take those same "*Homes of England*": has the undergraduate sighed that he found no place in that elegant catalogue of British domiciles? Let him dry his tears, and make out for himself what Mrs. Felicia would have written; let him simply clothe the permanent skeleton of the Hemanesque with the form appropriate to the special case—and what does he get? Just this:

The College homes of England,
 All scattered up and down ;
 They are smiling on the three main streets
 Thro' all the gas-lit town ;
 From College-gardens forth they peep,
 Each piglike in a poke ;
 And fearless there the scholars sleep
 Like grubs within the oak.

Poor lady ! Unappreciated Felicia ! We shall one day know your true worth ; when the new humour has banished laughter, when Mr. J. K. Jerome has still further eclipsed the gaiety of nations—then, athirst for the lost luxury of cachinnation, we shall turn to the “ Child’s first grief,” and thank the fluent female who wrote, or who might have written—for after reading her you get a kind of disease, a Felicia on the forefinger, which drives the pen you know not how, and sometimes makes you doubt whether you are transcribing Mrs. Hemans or bringing her up to date ; the reader must determine—

Child. Oh ! call my brother back to me,
 I cannot play alone.

Felicia. I’d not have bought thee games for two,
 If I had only known !

Felicia. He would not hear thy voice, fair child,
 He may not come to thee.

Child. My dear mamma, you drive me wild
 With **all** your frumpery !

Child. And by the brook and in the glade
 Are all our wanderings o’er ?

Felicia. Five pounds for that go-cart I paid—
I wish I’d known before ! (ad lib.)

Observe again the telling effect of the concluding italics ; you may wrap your moral in flummery, you may couch your powder in jam, but a powder there must be, and no true poetry was ever written yet without a moral.

We have selected but little from the mountainous writings of Felicia ; but by the single bone you shall often be able to reconstruct the whole beast in imagination.

One word more.

"No man," says in effect the same noble reviewer, who thought Wordsworth and Coleridge would 'never do,' "no man could have written these poems."

How exquisitely true! How sublimely penetrating! But it is not all. If he could, would he?

PHILIPPUS.

NOCTURNE.

SLEEP that is sweet comes soon;
Love dies; the waves that weep
Chant to the low red moon
The burden of the deep.
Sleep comes; the heart of June
Beats faint; I long to sleep.

G.

MELEAGER.

The Garland of Boyhood's Flowers.

(From the Greek Anthology.)

EROS for Cypris wove a garland rare,
And gathered all the flowers of boyhood fair,
And joined a wreath that should all hearts ensnare.

For Diodore he plucked the lily bright,
For Asclepiades a violet white,
And culled a thornless rose for Heraclite.

Dion he gave the blossom of the vine,
And set therewith for thee, sweet Theromine,
A crocus golden as those locks of thine!

Thyme for Oudiades; an olive spray
For curly-haired Muiscus, and the bay,
Virtue's fair evergreen that blooms alway.

O happy Tyre, all other isles above,
Where lies the sacred incense-breathing grove,
Garden of beauteous boys beloved of Love!

P. L. O.

CAUSERIES DU VENDREDI.

No. IV.—Fore-Words on Barrack-Room Ballads.

MR. KIPLING has often been called crude and coarse, both of which he is; but he has lately been insulted by being called vigorous.

He is not vigorous.

He is simply *vulgar*. Vulgar in a good sense—vulgar and sensible and natural. . . .

But Mr. Kipling, like a few other geniuses, has a way of baffling epithet.

Just as you think you have at last got him into a corner, or fitted him neatly into a paragraph, he bobs up impertinently at the other side of the literary round table with a definite and defiant yah! that, to change the metaphor, forces you to dismount your microscope and lean back regretting your inability to analyze him, and still half afraid and half ashamed to appreciate him frankly.

No; epithet will not do for Mr. Kipling.

He is inevitable in everything he does; and he does and makes a good many good things, one of which good things, almost forgotten in our hurry to talk about it, lies before us, in a good red skin like Mr. Kipling's, and with a good sensible back like his too.

Everybody has read it, and everybody has reviewed it except the *Spirit Lamp*.

Let us take a look inside.

But before indulging in the pleasure of quotation from a book that will bear quoting from almost at random, we must give some idea of the sort of atmosphere it breathes.

One said somewhere, and very well, that the man who wrote the cockney ballads published in *Punch*, must have been able to think in cockney.

And so it is with these Barrackroom Ballads. The man who wrote them must have been able to think in Atkins.

At this point the reader will, nay, must quiff: "Why, the fool hasn't read Departmental Ditties"!

The fool *has* read them, but prefers to keep to his point and examine these ballads, as he thinks every work ought first to be examined—by itself, and with as few prepossessions (derived from earlier works) for or against the author as possible—in one word, to treat the book as anonymous.

But to return to our book.

The author has dived long and deeply into the bilge water

of the barrack-room as Mr. Kipling, and has risen as some cleanly and dripping Triton whom the foul water has been powerless to sully.

And this Triton can sing too; and although he has but one song, sings it uncommonly well, for he sings the scarlet and squalor of soldiering, and sings it, as it should be sung, in *slang*.

The absurd theory current a few years ago that this was inadmissible in literature has been criticized too often for us to do more than allude to it here.

Had there been no defence of slang before to-day, the rapier-thrust of one of these ballads, if we must choose one from a book that is itself a whole armoury of such weapons, the ballad named "Snarleyow," would have been sufficient to put the dying theory out of its agony.

The boldness with which this usually cumbrous weapon is handled is one of the wonders of the book.

It is indeed, perhaps, owing to this very boldness, joined to an absolute mastery over his rhyme, that we are able to tolerate its harshness.

We are so hurried on by the gallop of the verse, that it is absolutely only on a second careful reading that we note with surprise such words and phrases as "mortal," "blomin'" battle, "tuckin' down the brow," and "you may lay your Monday head." This may, of course, be put down to very high art indeed, or to Mr. Kipling's unconscious identification of himself with the life of a private. Which-ever of the two it be, it is *natural* and elastic in the highest degree, and therefore could hardly be bettered. . . .

The book then has one theme—the soldier; and is written in one language—slang.

Of course it would be unjust to put down all the sentiments in it as Mr. Kipling's own, but finally neglecting the theory about previous work which we had the hardihood to enunciate a few lines back, it seems fair to say this—that beneath the cheap and sometimes nasty cynicism to which Atkins is allowed to treat us, we may at all events detect two threads of thought that runs through most of

Mr. Kipling's earlier books—a bitter contempt for women as a class, and a still more bitter contempt for the Anglo-Indian administration of justice. This limits it immensely, but then of course in spite of what we have previously said, Mr. Kipling is immensely limited.

But we have perhaps been too serious, and certainly too long.

Let us end with two or three quotes that will serve as good examples of two phases of this talent. Here is the opening verse from "Cells":—

"I've a head like a concertina; I've a tongue like a button stick;
I've a mouth like an old potato, and I'm more than a little sick;
But I've had my fun o' the corporal's guard; I've made the
cinders fly,
And I'm here in the Clink for a thundering drink and blacking
the corporal's eye."

Or again—

"'E's a daisy, 'e's a ducky, 'e's a lamb!
'E's a injia-rubber idiot on the spree,
'E's the on'y thing that doesn't give a damn
For a regiment o' British Infantee!"

Mr. Kipling is not at his best in serious verse (at any rate in this book), but here is something surely far above the average—

The black log crashed above the white,
The little flames and lean,
Red as slaughter and blue as steel
That whistled and fluttered from head to heel
Leaped up anew, for they found their meal
On the heart of the Boondi Queen.

By the way, why does this last verse irresistibly suggest Mr. Swinburne?

MR. B.

THE SHAVELING'S STORY.

(Just to shew how it's done.)

How did I get my name, sir? my reputation you mean.
(My name I got from my father, and jest as it's always been);
But as for my reputation, why it ain't so very much;
I'm only an amature, but perhaps not bad as such.

Well, here is my story.—Fame, sir, came to me all of a heap,
No wake-up-and-find-yourself-famous—I never went to sleep.
You see, my ballads were famous—I printed them pamphlet-like,
And my family bought 'em by scores till the printers threatened to
strike.

You've seen the *Stoker's Story*? In the style of Dagonet;
'Taint very hard to master—I'll do more in that line yet.
But let me come back to my story, and I'll do my best as I go
To shew you some of the merits that make people take to me so.
(By the way I must really mention I'm an excellent drawing-room
wag,
And at Smokers—but then of course you've seen all that in the *Mag.*)

'Tis a lovely night in winter three years ago come June,
Cigarettes like stars in the streets, and above sich an 'eavenly moon;
(Observe my gift of *description*—one of my fortes, you know),
I'm a-sauntering down the High Street, tralaring as I go
Off to the Musical Union to play my own Quartett;
Expecting a crowd—they've heard of the Oxford Dagonet.
I goes in quite confused, and knowing they're staring at me,
(I'm a modest man, but I knew what they came there to hear and
see);

I felt myself quite uncivil not to be making a speech,
Though nobody called upon me; when all of a sudden-screech
Goes the fiddle of little Jiffer (he was playing along of me),
And we all begins tuning like mad—myself and the other three.
And when we was tuned and ready, I says to 'em “wait a sec.,”
And I clears my mellifluous throat, and cranes out my shapely neck,
“A few well-chosen words” says I, “comes never amiss,
“And the long and short of the business, gents and ladies, is this:
“Don't be too 'ard on a novice, but hear me out to the end,
“And kindly mention yours truly if you should have a musical
friend;”

And then I turns to my comrades and says, “We can't start too soon,
“I don't believe in the 'armony, just you stick to the tune.”
And up they strikes a-fiddling as mad as a pantomime,
For I was a tidy fast player and soon should be out of time.
Holy Moses! I was quickening, they were quite three bars behind,
But the tune's the thing, says I, and I smiles 'em a ‘never mind.’

And my goggles fell off my eyes, and the sweat ran down my face,
 It weren't so much like a tune, as a sort of a kind of a race ;
 (Plenty of go's my style—I'm none of your 'armony blokes),
 I plays like a favourite (which I am) in the last few yards of the Oaks.
 And when we stops a-playing and looks around for applause,
 I caught an 'orrible silence, and couldn't imagine the cause ;
 So I puts my spectacles on, and jest looks round the room,
 And bless my soul, the place was as quiet as the tomb ;
 And I looks again, and then I says, " Why, Jiffer, don't you see,
 " I know what's the matter with 'em—my fault—'ow silly of me ;
 " You remember how I asked 'em to mention my name to a friend,
 " They're all gone off to do it—but *they didn't wait till the end !*'

O. T. M.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A Brand from the Burning.

To the Editor of the " Spirit Lamp."

SIR,—I hold it a sure thing that he who writeth a letter to a Periodical giveth hostages to the *Review of Reviews* ; which figure if I have used before in another place, it is no matter ; there is no man that hath been long dead, but shall sometimes repeat his good things.

But lest you suppose me illbred or at all Uncivill, who write to you without Acquaintance ; it were best I set forth the Cause and Intent of this my letter. For I write not so much of my own private Mind as for others, as one deputed by many, the Secretary to a Multitude. You must know Talk hath been here very busy touching certain new Prints current in Oxforde : of which it is said that they are the *Vena Porta* of young Wit ; and this opinion very generally obtains. Whereas others liken them to Sores and *Whelks* that are outward Signs of a foul and uncleanly habit of the Body Academick. And indeed *Galen* and *Pliny* (I mean the Younger) very stoutly maintain that equal parts of *Sconce* and *Mercury* (these be Simples) have been known very saving in the like Case. For my part I hold this but a

passing Spleen of the Physician and his friend against this new and Sovereign Cure for the *Dyspepsy* or *Blues*.

The Wise King pronounced it that A great Book is a great Evil; and truly so is a great Paper. For here none of us save certain Old Bores (as who should say Master William Wordsworth) ever read the *Times*; and even he cannot stomach this *Isis*. Which tho' it be not very big, is yet sadly swollen with Vanity and Emptiness, and very ill esteemed among us, insomuch that many have declared it Asses' Provender, and no Gentleman's perusing. But if that be thought too heavy Damnation, take this in Comfort, that I give a Copy once in fourteen days to my Scout's Boy for his privy Reading.

But Digression is a Path whence return is more painful the longer it be delayed; and the Business of my Letter recalls me.

In our Ordinary, you have been much spoken of; and very good Wits have told me "they had a mind to contribute posthumously to the *Spirit Lamp*," but feared to be rebuked for making of it a *Departed Spirit Lamp*.

But in sooth my pen slips too fast. I shall therefore now recite what Alexander Pope hath well said of the *Isis*—

Still with abuse thy vapid pages cram;
Spite without wit ne'er made an epigram.

And for myself add "Play the man Master *Spirit Lamp*; you shall by God's grace kindle such a Conflagration as shall not be put out in a Day nor in a Term."

And with that subscribe myself

Your devoted Obedient Servant,

FRANCIS BACON.

Post Scriptum.—Master William Congreve bids me say that the *Rattle* is naught, and the *Isis* only fit for *Miss Prue*; but that the *Spirit Lamp* is the stuff for one who would do good in his Generation; and he would add much concerning Prudery and the Hollowness of it, which in the interest of *Purdour* I will not send. Lastly, for my part, look that you do not say that I am the Authour; for indeed *vixere fortes* besides me; neither love I those who make of Literature a Bun and me the one Plum in it.

THE COMING OF THE NIGHT WIND.

The broad blue sky into purple darkens,
 the sapphire glory of ocean fades,
 the panting earth for the Night wind hearkens,
 and the temple pillars cast longer shades :

the warm strong life of the sun is failing,
 whose fiery kisses smote flower and tree,
 and the white moon over the palms is sailing,
 a phantom ship on a waveless sea.

Now the earth is still, as a heart whose beating
 is stayed a moment through hope or fear,
 but the great stars glow with a golden greeting,
 and the pilot Cross to the south is clear :

till a silver flash on a far wave breaking,
 a stir as the grasses begin to nod,
 and the nervous rustle of palm leaves shaking,
 herald the Night wind that flies from God.

Ceylon, 1891.

PERCY ADDLESHAW.

A HIGH STREET REVERIE.

GEORGE LORD BYRON and Mr. Pater of Brasenose have very much to answer for. They are motor men. Mr. Ruskin may be taken as authority for the first part of our opening sentence, and the position of the second writer in literature is well-known to all who are familiar with recent works in artistic and literary criticism. The peer talked of harems and corsairs, of pirates and outlaws—his dialect was filled with scimitars, yataghans, peris and bulbuls. But the school he founded could only copy the external Byron without possessing his great force; they copied the collar, they missed the charm. So it is with the school of writing and of art-criticism of which Mr. Pater is the founder, the oracle and hierophant. His dress is the dress of other men. He affects no external idiosyncrasies. His speech is polished and lucid, and his top-hat is as prosaic as that of the Vice-Chancellor.

But the school he has founded—for of the æsthetic movement and the æsthetic school and cult he is the real head and founder—has degenerated into such latter-day freaks of manner, speech and costume as cannot but move the laughter of their friends. “My dear,” said Sydney Smith to a little girl who had torn her frock, “tearing frocks is *in itself* not a sign of genius, and young men who despise,

or are unfitted for, the most ordinary duties of life, regard their home as Boulogne." We ourselves take a genial interest, as bystanders, in the oddities and the fribbles of our golden youth, though we fear that in their eyes we who love a good hot day are but degraded Philistines, who will not pull down the blind to exclude from our rooms the burning rays of that ribald and buoyant optimist the April sun!

"Oh! Paul, Paul,"—says De Jones of Magdalen to us the other day—"have you read that last little thing by Daudet or Soubise?"

De Jones, we may here remark, is one of the tribe that reverses the feelings of those who provoked the wrath of Horace; and in esoteric essay-societies will read a "Note on three French stylists of the last decade." To his query we have, to our confusion and disgrace, to reply in the negative.

"Do then at your earliest," says De Jones. "It is perfect; since Flaubert or Cherbuliez left us we have had nothing like it. The opening is supremely consummate, and the *dénouement* is consummately supreme—so chiselled, so rich, so jewelled."

Our language is rich in words of ambiguous sound—the last epithet is a case of this, and we looked a modest point of interrogation.

"Vous vous écarterez de la question," said our critic gently but wearily. "But read it. He is one of our sweetest and of our swiftest. His lyre has all the chords. He has sat at the feet of the masters, and has been behind the veil. Perhaps nothing has been left us so delicately perfect, and yet withal so pulsating with pullulating life and the weirdest witchery of a gorgeous fancy, since we lost Ho-hi-ko, the great master of Japanese keramic, who lived five hundred years before the Hegira, and who flung his fluttering passion on the tints of a fan, to last till the daedal stars are reft from their spheres."

De Jones groaned. Let us note in passing the tendency of these ecstatic youths to date by heathen or Mohammedan marks of time. They have resigned Christianity. They say it wearies them. They have Buddha, Confucius, and Blavatsky. Theirs, too, is the Zend-avesta. Here, De Jones suddenly inserts a limp finger into our palm, and crawls pensively away.

The sun has just sunk in the High Street. The men are coming up from the river. They are not æsthetic, these men. We own to a shudder of conviction that they do

not read Mr. Pater, that their aspirations are not of the sweetest and the swiftest, that they are not behind the veil. We freely concede to the weary æsthete by our side that the old Greek dress was more poetic than what he has to designate with a sepulchral groan as "togs." Like the dying Agricola we too miss a something that is lacking in refinement in their knees and bare calves. We are in this sombre, half relenting mood, when there is another voice on the air, and we see Perkins of Trinity.

"Oh! Paul, Paul," he says impulsively, taking our irresponsible arm, "*have* you heard that last thing by Popplewowski of Cracow?"

Here we again remark that with our sweetest and swiftest, Mozart and Beethoven are "tuney" and fit (in the ears and eyes of these soulful creatures) only for the music-hall.

"Turner," said Perkins to us one day impressively, "was a fellow who was just equal to painting Admiral Vernon on a sign-board; and as for Landseer, you may throw him 'like physic to the dogs.' Millet and Millais—*Arcades ambo*—little to choose between them. In this year's Exhibition in Paris —"

But we digress. Again we had to our great humiliation and contrition to express our regret that we had not yet heard the great master.

"*Maestro*," said Perkins in a gently-censorious and correcting tone, "you may well call him. So dramatic in conception, yet so exquisitely finished in smallest parts—like the Bacchante in the Dresden Gallery. What undertones of weird sadness, yet replete with joyous cadences, breaking through the thundergloom of his genius! He is at the height of Art with —"

"Händel, Bach, Meyerbeer, Weber," we said unconsciously.

Perkins sighed. "These are Philistines, Paul. But you *will* come?" And he looked withal so earnest and so yearning in our eyes that though that night we had fully resolved to be elsewhere, we could not but reply that we should be delighted to have the pleasure of listening to the strains of Mazurkas *à la hongroise*, or studies in the glirigliri and tom-tomby, some Helvetian or Cingalese composer whose name was now towering above the western pines, or to some *fantaisie* or *rhapsodie* by some Tyrolese genius who had eclipsed Rubinstein in limpid simplicity, and Liszt in intelligibility.

"Here is a delicious gem I have by me," said Tomkyns

of Balliol to us lately, "a little thing in his own style by Chung Sing — *the coming man*, don't you know? His '*Leaves from the Yang-tse-Kiang*,' and the thing that made him—his lyric on Qung-lung in his '*Souvenirs of the Woang-ho*'—have been deliberately pirated by an American firm."

Yes, we repeat it. Our great countryman, George Lord Byron was a genius. His namesake of the No-Popery-Riots posed as a Protestant and died a Jew. The Peer has written things that will die with the language, and his school has produced verses that Macaulay would have stigmatized as too bad for the bellman. Mr. Pater is a man of learning and insight. His essay on Winckelmann in his "Studies in the Renaissance" is already classic on the subject. But his school has reached a Nadir beyond which that of Byron has never sunk. His followers have not his force, his dignity nor his manner. They affect the gorgeous, the *bizarre*, the jewelled. We are inclined to think Professor Freeman is right in warning young men against "brilliant" writing. Professor Jowett has reiterated the same warning, and we think, as we remember what Johnson said of the writing of Addison, that chairs of poetry and Newdigate Prize poems have a good deal to do with this decline of good English prose and of an unaffected style.

A SOFT, SWEET SORROW.

SKIRTING the long, low river-mead
I paced beneath the willows:
Of jousts, and junketings, and joys;
Of dons, and eke of donkey-boys
I dreamt—and armadilloes.
The scented summer breezes slept;
A fleeting shower had passed; the sky
Was laughing bright: I wondered why
The weeping willows wept.

A scarlet omen, lank and long,
Upon a bench had halted;
Upon the bench a maiden fair,
Of ruby lips and ruby hair,
And status unexalted;
Her gown his curls ambrosial decked—
A harmony in yellow—
Her arm his neck encircled like
A cobra di capello.

Ah! Well and truly might they weep,
For wonder wide and pity deep:
Yea sad and softly did they weep:
The willows weep, to see it.

A youth discreet and unbeguiled,
 Of aspect meek and saintly :
 And arm-a-linked a curate mild
 And habited so quaintly,
 Who waxed warm in high discourse
 And flushed a green carnation,
 Debating a disputed point
 Anent predestination.

*Ah ! Well and truly might they weep,
 For wonder wide and pity deep :
 Yea sad and softly did they weep :
 The willows weep, to see it.*

A tiny boy, a tinier girl,
 Of summers four and three ;
 And earnest eyes ; a fearsome frog :
 —Dramatis personae.
 With arm outstretched he held the thing—
 A love-gift ; with it went
 Entreaty inarticulate
 From eyelets eloquent.

*Ah ! Well and truly might they weep,
 For wonder wide and pity deep :
 Yea sad and softly did they weep :
 The willows weep, to see it.*

Still are the scented breezes sleeping :
 The fleeting shower has passed ; the sky
 Is laughing bright ; yet bitterly
 The gentle willows weep—and I
 Must leave them weeping.

M. B.

NOTICES.

THE columns of the *Spirit Lamp* are open to all the talents. We shall be glad to receive contributions in Prose or in Verse. They should be written on *one* side of the paper only, and sent in not later than the *Wednesday before publication*, to

THE EDITOR,
 c/o MR. JAMES THORNTON,
 HIGH STREET.

The day of issue is FRIDAY every week. MSS. will in no case be returned.



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THE GATES OF GAZA.

IV.

WILLIAM CONGREVE's biographers tell us he was very much ashamed of being a great man of letters ; and (indulging an affectation shared by many wits of the time) would pretend every one of his masterpieces was thrown off for his own distraction, in an hour of idleness or during a day's indisposition. For worlds he would not be known as an author ; he was merely an ordinary gentleman. In spite of this whim, to the last there were many who valued him least of all for his gentility, and would not be persuaded but that he was a mighty fine writer of comedy, and nothing else.

Mr. Thomas Rudiment, with not a few of his brethren, has a similar reluctance to be known for what he is—a professional instructor, namely, of academic youth. Not that the occupation is not to his taste, any more than play-writing was against Congreve's. He believes himself a born teacher, and would gladly have the fame of it, but for one thing, which he calls his method. This method simply consists in preventing his pupils from having the least suspicion that he is instructing them. When Thomas Rudiment was an undergraduate (he was twice in the First Class, and passed for a very promising Grecian), he discovered a great secret—he discovered why so many of the young men who attended the same lectures with him seemed to have no

notion of listening to what was told them, and still less of putting it down on paper. "Ah!" he would say, "that is because the lectures are not made interesting enough. Rigg of Corpus is a good man; but you feel at once he is teaching you. Once let a fellow get an inkling that you are teaching him, and you may as well stop lecturing. No one, in the first instance, likes lessons. What you have to do is to make a fellow learn without knowing it." Since Thomas Rudiment got his fellowship, he has devoted himself to putting his theories into practice—so successfully that at the present day no one would ever suspect his lectures of being in the least instructive.

To start with, he puts himself in the position of the average undergraduate. He lectures in slang and white flannel trousers; he "scores off" Herodotus, and affects to think Roby a bore; he treats George Grote and the Master of Balliol with cheap allusive impertinence; he enlivens a piece of textual criticism by sly references to University politics, and interrupts a valuable explanation to tell a personal anecdote. He is full of modern instances, and delights in anachronism—talks of Gamaliel as "that great Divinity Professor," and makes Demosthenes say "Gentlemen of Athens," and Cicero "My lords"; he is fond of improvising topical premisses in logic, like "Most undergraduates know a great deal more than dons"; "Some scholars keep too many chapels." When private pupils have done him no work, he contrives to fill up the hour with amiable digressions and a pipe of tobacco; and when you make a plain false quantity in your Sapphics, he looks the word out with a solemn and unprejudiced eye, and "finds no authority" for your *howler*.

Outside the Schools, he has the most ingenious plans for ingratiating himself with junior Oxford. He dresses fashionably and youthfully. He mimics other "dons" to the life, just to show he has no absurd class feeling. He gets up reading parties in Switzerland and tells you beforehand he does not expect any work will be done. He prides himself on being the general confidant and undergraduate's friend.

For my part, I look upon Mr. Thomas Rudiment as a production of the Kindergarten system. Don't suppose that great German invention, the labyrinthine "parlour" of that spider competition, which aims at providing delusive recreation for the book-worm in embryo, and succeeds in teaching grown-up people how to lisp, is confined to the education of weanlings and the care of the nursery-governess, "firm but kind." It has forgotten the allegory, the Ollendorffian method, the *conte moral*, and more than one historical novel. It has trained many of the most athletic ushers of our public schools; it has developed the University all-round-man; it has been the making of many a conscientious curate who can play cricket just well enough for Sundays.

And now the superstition has infected our "dons." None of them is so ignorant but he is afraid his class will be thinking him a prig. Hence springs up a new class of tutors who waste their time and ours; and hence springs that worthy and kindly man, that abominable Philistine, Mr. Thomas Rudiment.

Y.

FROM THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY.

The Gift of Scent.—Anonymous.

SCENT to my mistress sweet I send,
 But favour more than her
 The gift of scented myrrh;
 For to the scent herself can lend
 The perfume I prefer.

Cruel Laughter.

FOR ever laughing, but for ever dumb,
 You answer nothing, tho' I coax and flatter;
 I ask again; the smiling dimples come;
 I weep; you laugh.—Is this a laughing matter?

P. L. O.

MR. FROUDE'S NEW NOVELETTE.

WE learn many things from Mr. Froude's new book which are surely worth knowing. For when a man has made people believe him to be that which he is not, his slightest word cannot fail to possess a peculiar value of its own. How interesting it is, for example, to learn that our new professor dislikes Balzac, and that after reading *Le Père Goriot* he had "a desire to plunge into the sea and wash himself." We realise how morally superior he is to other men since he finds Balzac's characters such "abominable company"; and we feel that the devoted panegyrist of Henry VIII. has a right to be particular in the choosing of his companions. How satisfactory it is, also, to hear that he does not suffer from sea-sickness, and that he can read Xenophon without the aid of Kelly. Nay, by this time he must be able to measure his daily "constitutional" by parasangs. How pleasing it is, again, to discover that he feels a certain gratitude towards his benefactors, and considers that there should be no higher title than Marquis among the nobility. "I think we could do without dukes."

But these are only a few examples of the "wisdom of James." His book is full of sentences weighty and original; for there is no subject either in heaven or on earth upon which our Professor is not ready to inform us. He will even condescend to instruct in the matter of sport, for here too, as usual he has his positive opinions. The shooting of grouse and partridge he considers a poor thing; he would attack the wild beasts of the desert and the jungle even as did the ancient Templars. He quotes with approval St. Bernard's orders to the knights prohibiting mere frivolous amusement, and concludes with a fine burst of eloquence: "Some modern St Bernard seems to me desperately needed." But the essay was written seven years ago, and doubtless Mr. Froude has now found comfort in the contemplation of Lord Randolph Churchill's "deeds of derring-do."

But though, as I have tried to prove, Mr. Froude's book possesses incidental qualities of an unique kind, it is quite

impossible to place the volume under any known classification. It is certainly not history, for accuracy is a necessity in a serious historical work. But Mr. Froude, for example, talks of a fourteenth century pontiff as "poor *infallible* pope." And yet it is not fiction, for there is too much history and elementary theology strewn over its pages. It is of course not easy to judge a cause or an epoch soberly and without bias, but it is the duty of a man who seeks a responsible post as professor of history to endeavour to hold the balance fairly. And further, if to write history be beyond Mr. Froude's power, and the making of historical novelettes is the work he feels most competent to undertake, he should try and build his plots more amusingly, and he should not clog the actions of his stories by paragraphs of senile platitudes and trite reflections on human life. But it is almost as difficult to label this gentleman's *Moralia* as to read it.

For Mr. Froude is unfortunately (and this we discover with pain, for is he not beloved as a stylist by every penny-a-liner in these States?) not one of those writers who atone for their want of knowledge or constructive ability by the elegance and purity of their diction. On the contrary it would be hard to find a book written in worse English. It has no pretensions to style. Here are two examples taken at random and neither better nor worse than other passages. They represent Mr. Froude's two main faults as a writer, the aggressively simple and irritating jog-trot, and the criminally careless and blundering paragraph—

"Christ was all which gave the world and their own lives in it any real significance. It was not a ridiculous feeling on their part, but a very beautiful one. Some philosopher after reading the Iliad is said to have asked, 'But what does it prove?' A good many people have asked of what *use* pilgrimages were. It depends on whether we have souls or not."

Here is the second—

"You note your position on the chart; you scan it with the sense that the world of Norway is all before you to go where you like; you choose your next anchoring place;

you point it out to the pilot; you know your speed—there is no night in the summer months—you dine; you smoke your evening cigar; you go to your berth; you find yourself at breakfast in your new surroundings."

There is nothing more to be said about the "Spanish story of the Armada," a book which is only interesting to us in Oxford owing to a recent startling and unlooked-for event. "Moral institutions can only be kept alive while they answer the purposes for which they were created:" is one of Mr. Froude's own dicta, and few of us will care to dispute the wisdom and the truth of it.

Why then has Mr. Froude accepted the chair of Modern History?

W. P. A.

FROM CATULLUS.—XCVI.

CALVUS, if aught expressive of our woe
Find place or welcome in the voiceless tomb,
When we recall the loves of long ago,
And weep lost friendships of a bygone day;
Joy for thy love must surely then outweigh
Quintilia's sorrow for her early doom.

QUATRAIN.

IT may be we shall know in the hereafter
Why we, begetting hopes, give birth to fears,
And why the world's too beautiful for laughter,
Too gross for tears.

W. P. A.

CAUSERIES DU VENDREDI.

NO. IV.—Bret Harte.

"THOUGH not flush in filthy lucre, yet I often think on euchre
Or a sequence hand at poker with, for pardner, Tennessee—
And my footsteps often linger by that sultry "*Gin and Ginger*
Wood," just where Los Gatos leaves the trail and where you
catch the sea.

And while the stage is slowly swinging I can hear the bells are
ringing

From the Mission at Dolores, and the fresher breezes blow—

For the air is close and gritty in the Silver Crescent City

When there's steamer-night at 'Frisco and the lights are on St.

Jo."

W. K. L.

(*Poems and Ballads.*)

A new country America yet is, in the sense that she has not yet passed the purely mechanical stage of her growth and civilization, and that she is still content to import the ready-made European writer rather than to encourage the productions of home growth. Her best writers seem to find their best sphere out of her; for she either expatriates them to this country, or neglects them in her importation of such flimsy wares as Mrs. Humphrey Ward and H. R. Haggard—perhaps to their advantage, unless, like Oliver Wendell Holmes, they have the subsidy of a profession, or, like Longfellow, of a chair in a University.

But America, though not the home of original thinkers, is at least the land of omnivorous readers, and Charles Lamb, who thanked his stars for a taste so wide that the Bible was not too high, nor *Jonathan Wild* too low, would have been satisfied with the literary voracity of a public for whom the supply, through defiance of copyright and international piracy, is often inadequate. Thus the absence of a really national American literature is hardly to be wondered at in the stage of development at which the inventor of Hop Bitters or a wringing-machine bulks large in the mind of the public. Chesterfield said that when he wrote his best he was quoting Horace, and though in a few writers like Poe, Hawthorne, Ticknor, Prescott and others, America has asserted a claim to recognition, it is yet only in her humorists that she has produced anything racy and redolent of the soil. Artemus Ward created a school, but the school mistook Browne's humour for mere eccentricity, and wit for profanity. Mark Twain too often writes things that are quite incapable of a second reading: he grins through a horse collar, and his

school shines forth in *Texas Siftings* and the *Detroit Free Press*. The laugh becomes a mere guffaw.

Bret Harte is nothing if not artistic. There is no greater master of the art of narrative—the art that suggests the firm lines without undue obtrusion of details. The French soldier that in the Crimea served up to his tent a dinner *à la russe* of the usual ragoût, etc., from the remains of a saddle-girth and a cut from the old charger, has an admirer in Bret Harte. It is easier to write a three-volume novel than a *conte*—a story where there is no padding, but where every line has been etched firmly, and every stroke is in its right place. Easy writing is hard reading, and a writer of this nature will not be prolific in the number of his volumes. Though every line is calculated, yet the *labor limæ* is not seen: there is no inartistic and cumbrous psychological parade of motives. Our latter-day novel is cursed by the phantom of the *arrière-pensée*, and its crude addition of the moralist's *hæc fabula docet*. Victorious analysis and the study of motive were ignored by the old masters, and happily they are not to be found in the pages of this writer.

San Francisco is emphatically the city of Bret Harte—but it is the city as the Argonauts of '49 and he knew it,—the last effort of the colonial genius of old Spain that lives again in his story of *The Right Eye of the Commander*, and before the modern city of millionaires had passed the streets he describes in the opening pages of *A Ward of the Golden Gate*. The glamour of the old days is yielding to the modern spirit. The top-hat may be seen now on the head of the Chinaman—and the Mexican, like the Moorish king, will soon have to ascend the Mission Hills to take his last look on the city of his youth. The railway has brought the loafer and the shanty near the chapel of the Dolores he has made so famous in his pages, and the cutty-pipe has supplanted the cigarillo in the *posada*.

But Scott was just in time to save the Minstrelsy of the Border, and the old days of California live on again in the work of this by far the most distinctively American writer.

The breath of life is in all his creations, and the rustle of the pines in all his pages, like the song of the Tweed through

all the work of Sir Walter. Like Thackeray he has a galaxy of characters that again and again are made to reappear in his pages. The reader welcomes them as he would an old friend, for the men are real, live men, and not mere puppets. Indeed, to most of us he has made the red clay at Sandy Bar, the scenery of Red Dog and Poker Flat, as familiar as the Gala Water and the Torwoodlee of the great magician. We seem to see the dim sierras as clear as Ben Lomond or the Eildon Hills, and to have known personally the motley group that figure in his volumes. The forms are clear and distinct. We seem to be at the door of the saloon when the Wingdam Coach comes in with Yuba Bill on the box, and Jack Hamlin and Colonel Starbottle inside. We see Miggles, M'liss, the Duchess, John Oakhurst, the Luck—"no bigger than a derringer,"—Tennessee, "Sober and his face a-shinin'," and when we reach North Fork and Bill draws up at Independence House, we lounge up to the bar with the gravity of an old stager on the road who had known them all since '49.

Andrew Lang has said there are few writers who reach so high a standard that you can unhesitatingly recommend them to a friend. To our mind Bret Harte is up to that standard, and we never knew him fall below it. It is nearly twenty-four years ago that the kindred eye of Dickens detected the coming of a new writer in the *Overland Monthly*. Within the last five years we have seen the rise and the fall of many a star that, if the Press were to be believed, was following in the wake of this writer and rendering his name and fame less secure. Time has not endorsed the belief. Great writers found no schools—they have no tricks of mesmerism, no sleight of hand to be merely caught. They have no following but stand alone, for they keep their secret to themselves, and the crop of second-rate writers and imitators soon dies a natural death.

To those who have once read him no line of commendation is necessary. All those who have read him once will always read what he has written, and those who have tired of the belauded literary demigods of the day will do well, if they have not already done so, to commence their acquaintance

with a writer whose best pieces can be read twenty times, and yet seem fresh as ever. His last volume—the seventh of his collected works*—contains some of his best writing; in his *Sappho of Green Springs* the old subtle art of sustained interest to the close is seen in its perfection, and *Colonel Starbottle's Client* has the marks seen in *Flip* and *Maruja*, which in their effect, and artistic lightness of touch, are found only in this writer.

Addison—or the paper may be Steele's—remarks that we never read a book with interest but we think of the face of the author: some subtle link of personal connection is awakened. The value of the volume to all admirers of Bret Harte is much enhanced by the fine portrait from the original by John Pettie, R.A.

PAUL MELDRUM.

DE PROFUNDIS.

You gave your lips, your eyes,
 You played your part,
 Kisses and tears and sighs;
 I gave my heart.

I had no song to sing,
 No golden art,
 No grace of form to bring;
 Only my heart.

I kissed your eyes and face,
 Bought in love's smart,
 Bright smiles and sweet disgrace;
 You broke my heart.

O broken heart, be still;
 Love's dreams depart,
 Life's hope shall death fulfil,
 O broken heart.

G.

* The Complete Works of Bret Harte, vol. vii., Chatto & Windus, 1892.

TRIOLETS.

1.

I really could not help that sneeze ;
'Twas frightful—like a clap o' thunder !
I felt it coming by degrees.
(A handkerchief, quick, if you please !)
Is this another one, I wonder ?
I really could not help that sneeze ;
'Twas frightful—like a clap of thunder !

2.

I wonder if you will
Be plough'd in the Schools ?
Please don't think me cruel :
You know your books *too* well.
(Most pass-men are fools !)
I wonder if you will
Be plough'd in the Schools ?

TYMO.

OF SHOPS.

How immeasurably and miserably modern is the world become. Every branch of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil must nowadays bear fruit ; which, unless its wrapping-tissue be of the rosiest, and its packing-box bear the genuine Mesopotamian label, is only fresh matter for our avoiding.

Even the Shop has given up setting the fashion, and only approximates to self satisfaction if its bonnets or its bananas be a mail in front of Chicago. For the only apple of distinction that Paris is now permitted to bestow is reserved for the headgear of middle class Venuses, like their husbands ever behind the Times, deploring the eclecticism of Battersea and bending astonished suburban eyes on the deserted Temple of the Mode—whose solitary porter hath already been be-

knighted, and her marble columns converted into paper capitals.

The old days of tailors adequate and adept, who (so to speak) offered you a cigar over your Smalls, and fet you a glass of sherry over your summer suitings, are now but an old man's memory. And then the old manner of those older tailors! How severely, yet how paternally, would he waist you for a wedding! How slyly would he slip you a lounge-coat, or turn you out a Turkey trouser! Now the only thing he slips you is his "small account demanding immediate attention"; and the only thing he turns you out is a sadder and a wider man. And then the real fatherly interest in those peculiar buttonings to your kerseymeres; the demi-deferential dogmatism of his "Nay, dear sir, it will not do—a man of your figure!—Ebenezer—the especial Scots tweedings."

All this, or something very like it is passed away—with the Art of Conversation. Now-a-days when we want conversation we have to make it; in the old times there remained still a few good things to say, and people had still the sense to prepare their impromptus.

* * * * *

But in our disgust with our grandsons we have forgotten our garrulity; and we must needs get back presumedly to our starting-point. Yes, another vice of this century. Everybody now-a-whiles must write good English, and stick a point in each of his paragraphs. Shade of ambling, shambling, rambling Charles Lamb! Bothered with no conventions, worried by no Murray, simply and delightfully bent on button holing his public, and treating it with no "sincerity and reality," with no "muffins," and no "not the promise of muffins"—here was a man who had understood that Grace must be taught only to children, and that Chesterfield was the sort of man to say his prayers (if he ever said any) on his stilts.

But what the deuce have we to do with Charles Lamb? Revenons à nos moutons.

We began with something about a shop. They are pestered with new ideas, these shopmen—they are inclined to dress you where you would feel inclined to dress them, and soundly: they must needs put their foot into your broadcloth, quarrel with your calves if they are at all episcopal, and advise padding if you happen to have a neat leg for a boot. I should like to trounce them all—with their miserable malaprop coats, their Turkey-carpet waistcoats, their “beautiful things in brown,” their “Perhaps you might fancy something a little smarter, sir?”

There used to be—but I have said all this before—there used to be . . . almost a *friendship* between oneself and Snip. He would prattle you of politics if you were politically minded, tell you of the reigning toast if you lived in the Midlands, recommend you a sound wine (from one of his friends) if he thought he could credit you with taste enough to buy it.

Now every Duchess has retired from a shop; every waiting-woman has a reputation. Egad, sirs, it was different in my day! One of the first proverbs every young dog learned from his spelling-book, was “A place for everybody and everybody in his place;” but now every chambermaid is “nicely situated,” and only manages to find her place in church. The governess too of my time used to wear a black gown and never came down to dinner, and the curate used to go away before the cheesecakes; the governess of to-day refers to her “dear little charges”—(and demme they are dear!)—and the curate is no more afraid of contradicting you than he is of contradicting the Thirty-nine Articles.

And talking of Articles . . . (Mark you, I used to write for Mr. Steele.) . . .

But where . . . the California have they put my slippers?

* * * * *

What does the dog mean by not bringing me my negus?

MR. B.

MARTIAL iii. 65.

As breath of apples set to maiden lips,
 As breeze that the Corycian crocus sips,
 As vineyard with its first white buds ablow,
 As grass where late the browsing sheep did go,
 As myrtle or the mower in Arab fields,
 As the faint scent that bruised amber yields,
 As the wan flames from Eastern incense flare,
 As grass-field wet with summer raindrops rare,
 As dew of nard upon a tumbled coronal,
 Such, love unkind, the perfumes of thy kiss recall:
 What were their scent if without stint thou gav'st them all?

L. C.

IN MEMORIAM GREVILLE CHESTER, EGYPTOLOGIST.

Χαῖρε θανόν· σὺ μὲν 'Αἴγυπτόν τ' 'Αἰγύπτια τ' ἔργα
 ἔρμηνεὺς σοφίᾳ ὤπασας ἡμετέρᾳ·
 'Αἴγυπτος δὲ θανόντα σ' ἐν ἀλλοδαπῇ χθονὶ τηρεῖ,
 μνημοσύνην δὲ σέθεν δέῦρο χάριν τε φέρει.

J.

AMALTHEA.

She cometh from the violet beds,
 from the throb of the purple flowers;
 her head is pleasure garlanded,
 her hands are lovers' hours.
 She treadeth on the daisie stalks
 that smile to her and die:
 in the yellow light of the dying sun
 their petal'd souls go by.
 She touched me with her dewy breath
 and the wave of her golden hair—
 the strong stars trembled at our love:
 Death came and found her fair.

Φ.

EDITORIAL.

EDITORIAL self-gratulation comes with the second number, or never. But though it may be too late to say "so far, so good," the end of Term seems to us a legitimate occasion for a few words on ourselves and our critics.

The number of questions that have been asked about the *Spirit Lamp* has been an encouraging sign, but at the same time it has been a little tiresome. First, a great many persons have been concerned to know what is the object of the paper? It does not seem to have occurred to them that one could do far better without an object than without subscriptions. But since they will not take "none" for an answer, let us fall back upon a pretext (the simplest form of truth), and say that our object was merely to give ourselves pleasure, and one more interest in life. If this will not do for them, let us add that we have not altogether been without a certain modest willingness to add to our incomes.

Others are for ever inquiring Whether the Editors are serious or no? Now this, we protest, is a very great impertinence. If you see a man trifling, you have a right to suppose him not to be in earnest; if you see the *Spirit Lamp* with one foot always in the Grave and the other in the Gay, you have simply no right to hazard a judgment. We would be supposed in earnest wherever the reader can find it in his heart to agree with our views and our sentiments; and where we have the misfortune to run counter to his mind, he is very heartily welcome to write us down a trifler. Read the Editorial in our first number, and be very sure you have then fathomed us as deeply as we mean to be fathomed, and that further inquiry would be trespass.

Then almost everyone who has seen the *Spirit Lamp* is agreed that it ought to be cheaper. We confess we cannot understand this notion. Are those who object serious? Is it said in sober earnest?

Intrinsically, as so much print and paper, as so many minutes reading for a leisured and voracious public, there

may perhaps not be sixpence' worth between our covers. But that is not enough. Suppose the paper worth reading then, it is very certain, for twice the money you will never get elsewhere what it gives you. However this piece of advice has been so generally given, that we are resolved to bow before the tyrannical unanimity of the critics, and instead of once a week, to appear fortnightly next term, at the same price, and in greater bulk.

As for thoroughly hostile criticism, we shall see most of that blown over by next term; it may readily be believed that the class of persons who cannot rightly appreciate the *Spirit Lamp*, is of the sort to whom Schools (Pass) are a standing danger, a present terror, a possible *casus banniendi*.

In conclusion we would wish to thank all to whom our gratitude is due for contributions or suggestions, and politely suggest to the *Isis* that its mission is now at an end; our name is made, we need no further puffing; the delicate thing for it to do is to die.

NOTICES.

THIS is the last number this Term of the *Spirit Lamp*. We shall appear next Term once a fortnight on Fridays.

All contributions should be sent to—

THE EDITORS,
c/o MR. JAMES THORNTON,
33, HIGH STREET.



THE SPIRIT LAMP.

No. I. FRIDAY, MAY 6, 1892. PRICE 6D.

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WE hope, next week, to reserve a page for advertisements of rooms to be let during Eights' Week and Commém. : and by offering such a list, to save undergraduates and others much unnecessary trouble in obtaining lodgings. Each insertion limited to three lines will be charged 1/6.

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THE SPIRIT LAMP.

No. II. FRIDAY, MAY 13, 1892. PRICE 6D.

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THE SPIRIT LAMP.

An Oxford Magazine without News.

NO. VI. FRIDAY, JUNE 10, 1892. PRICE 6D.

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The Spirit Lamp.

VOL. 2. No. I.

OCT. 21, 1892.

OF ONE WHO FELL IN BATTLE.

WAR OF THE REBELLION, 1864.

By smoke-encumbered field and tangled lane,
Down roads whose dust was laid with scarlet dew,
Past guns dismounted, ragged heaps of slain,
Dark moving files, and bright blades glancing through,
All day the waves of battle swept the plain
Up to the ramparts, where they broke and cast
Thy young life quivering down, like foam before the blast.

Then sank the tumult. Like an angel's wing
Soft fingers swept thy pulses ; the west wind
Whispered fond voices, mingling with the ring
Of Sabbath bells of Peace—such peace as brave men find,
And only look for till the months shall bring
Surcease of wrong, and fail from out the land
Bondage and shame, and Freedom's altars stand.

BRET HARTE.

THE DECLENSION OF LITERATURE.

It would be absurd to insist unduly on the fact that the true criterion of fame is not genius but gentility. We have all of course been long convinced of the truth of this axiom. It may not, however, be quite unprofitable to bring it, so to speak, out of solution, and test it a

little more closely than we are in the habit of doing. To possess an infallible literary tact which will enable us to predict (from the mere cover of any book, and without the impertinency of a more detailed examination) either, on the one hand, that it will never elbow its way into fame, or, on the other, that it is the work of a master-hand, is assuredly *not* enough. In these utilitarian days we must do more than possess a conviction; we must justify it to the microscope of an incredulous world.

I shall therefore here propose a test which will for the future render everything but the reading of the book unnecessary, a test so easy that a child may learn to apply it in from one to two minutes; and yet so wide that it will embrace everything from a 32mo to an elephant folio.

May the book be considered by any fair process of mental gymnastics to come under any of the following cases?

Nom. and Acc. A Lord.

Voc. My Lord.

Gen. Of a lord.

Dat. To or for a lord.

Abl. By, with or from a lord.

The reader must not misunderstand me. Any one from a prince of the blood royal to a knight of industry is here included in the term lord. This distinction must be kept in mind if we are ever to arrive at any conclusion at all.

Let us dip then into the pages of a forgotten author, once the breviary of the *bourgeois*, now doomed to occupy the position of the photograph album without its privileges, doomed to be diurnally dusted and as diurnally mis-quoted.

Let us take up our Shakespeare. To what does he owe—or rather did he owe (for Shakespeare is as out of date as the Reformation!) his enormous, his unparalleled popularity? Simply to the fact that he was *so excessively genteel*. He has no style, is notoriously

artificial in sentiment and deficient in dramatic propriety, but he "kep' hisself respeckable," and has therefore inevitably appealed to the respectable. Run your eye down the list of *Dramatis Personæ* in any play of his whatever, and count the commoners. *Desunt omnino*. The eye is delighted with dukes, made merry with marquises and positively pampered with princes! Nary a garlic-eating squire, nary a buxom pudding-making madam, save to serve as a disinfectant to their distinction, or as the plain boiled potato doth to a heavy steak in the country. "Give me blood" is the cry of the classes; and "the silver swan of Avon" comes *move pugilum* up to the scratch, and gives it them in buckets. Yes! that is why Shakespeare succeeded—he was so aristocratical. Twit me not with "The Taming of the Shrew." It is a solitary instance of failure. But even here, I would submit, he fails not in the *quality* but in the quantity; for, say, is it not the glory of the comedy that its very summit is crowned and consecrated by our nominative case: "A lord?" An after-thought? Not a bit of it. The whole play hinges on the opening episode, and without "a lord" this would be impossible. No, no, no, no, no. We may confidently affirm of Shakespeare that never and at no time is his Burke worse than his bite. He would not be himself without his rosary of notables, we should miss our way to his shrine had he not shred unnumbered guiding strawberry-leaves in his wake.

Again and hurriedly to cluster a few examples and crush a precept from them:—Who would have ever heard of Spenser had not the "Faerie Queen" been ushered in with verses addressed to a perfect galaxy of Right Honourables, Most Honourables, Renowned and Valiant Lords and Virtuous and Beautiful Ladies? Who would have ever admired the blasphemies of Byron, or giggled over the conceits of Chesterfield, had they been born plain Jones or Johnson? Who, again, would have read "Vanity Fair" if the Marquis of Steyne had been a commoner? who would have

split their sides and cried their eyes out over the "School for Scandal," if the heroine had been *Mrs.* Teazle, and had lived at Shepherds' Bush? Why again is Dickens so intensely unpopular—Ouida the devoured of all the devourers? Because Dickens deals not in dukes, and because Ouida does know how to dally delicately with the doings of the duchesses.

But in the good old times (when the first page of a book was known as the *title*-page) one had no need to over-lord one's manuscript. A mere hint was enough; and a dedicatory epistle to the brother-in-law of a baronet (especially if abbreviated and written BART.) ensured a gallop through a dozen editions and a compliment from the nation (in the Commons). In a word they knew how to use the fourth of our cases—

Dat. To or for a lord.

And what shall we say of the ablative? Hats off, reader, ere we put on our spectacles!

By, with, or from a lord

Who, to pick the stalk of an example from a nursery of instances, is *the* historic letter-writer?—Lord Chesterfield. Who the most popular of novelists (some fifteen years ago)?—Lord Beaconsfield. Who the greatest poet that ever stitched stanza together?—Lord Rochester. And who finally the greatest master with stained face and broken form, whose fadeless crown still shines among the brightest in our literary Valhalla?—One Francis, Lord Bacon, Viscount St. Albans.

In conclusion, and to come down to earth again, are not all these to be considered neatly docketed if we simply take one more glance at the annexed table?

Nom. and Acc. A lord.

Voc. My lord.

Gen. Of a lord.

Dat. To or for a lord.

Abl. By, with or from a lord.

MR. B.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

WE are glad to see Mr. Lang has announced for publication his promised edition of Sir Walter Scott. There is yet "money in it," when four editions of the great novelist have been called for in two years. The sign is a healthy sign of an advancing taste towards literary sanity and whole-mindedness, and towards a belief that the reign of the *conte* and the short story is drawing to a close. It may be easier to write a three volume novel, full of the sea, the sky and woman's love, than a good short story, but we may be sure that when the great novelist again appears among us he will work μέγας μεγαλωστί only in a sphere suitable to his power. He will not write the Lord's Prayer in the compass of a threepenny bit, for a great action demands a great stage,—and we trust this new edition of Sir Walter will be worthy alike of the great novelist and of the editor who for long has been known to be an enthusiastic admirer of his subject.

Scott for a little has been under an eclipse. In a world which draws its literary verdict from the *Review of Reviews*, and when the gaiety of nations is eclipsed by the poisoning of a racehorse, or by a Whitechapel murder, Sir Walter has but little chance. He is not sensational enough. The man you meet at dinner,—candour compels us to state the sex is generally the reverse,—who says he cannot, or does not, read Scott, will be sure to part his hair in the middle, and save his hearers the trouble of inferring the speaker is an ass. Such a judgment is a mental Nilometer, and is a safe gauge of the calibre of the man.

There is a literary and spiritual *Byronismus* yet abroad. We are all wishing to air our experiences in religion and philosophy. We wish to proclaim that our hearts are withered and sere, our souls a burning, or extinct, volcano, and that tears are not in us or that they are as Marah. We all turn on our navel in a morbid way, as Carlyle said, and the Homeric man of mental, bodily

and spiritual sanity, who has no experiences, has been decried as shallow, and as having, like Canning's Knife-grinder, "no story to tell," no gospel to proclaim. How finely Lowell has remarked that in this day of George Sandisms, Chateaubriand-sentimentalists and self-exploitations, we are all hunting after the unreal, distorted, untrue,—the figures of St. Preux, René, Werther, Manfred, Quasi-Modo! The men who do greatly are the men who are sincere—with themselves. If Shakspeare, Scott and old Homer had sorrows,—and doubtless the world did *not* go any better then than now in "Scio's rocky isle"—they kept them to themselves by, like a Davy lamp, consuming their own smoke, and making them for ever the warp and woof of consolation to their own kind.

The great advance of physical science, and the concurrent material improvement in human environments have rather betrayed the unwary to the belief that the mind of man can be red-taped and pigeon-holed. Excessive use of the Evolution theory has led the unscientific to regard mind and society as an exaggerated sausage machine, which lands the belated beholder on the Pisgah-top of a heap of antiquated prejudices, from which he proudly thinks he has escaped through the valley of the shadow to the dazzling effulgence of a fully realized knowledge. We think, however, all this is also being itself evolved, and that the critics who assert that Scott is deficient in the analysis of motive and action, that his morality is conventional, and his contribution to positive thought is *nil*, are all astray on first principles, and that the highest art is the suggestion, without the constant parading, of the dominant conception in the artist's mind.

Indeed to talk of the impressionist as holding the mirror up to nature is to betray ignorance of elementary optics, and to forget that it is the province of the photographer to distort, and that of the artist to preserve, the spirit of the original. The artist transfigures nature to make it real, and hence it is that we allow Turner to

take liberties with the towers of Kilchurn Castle, and with the Towing of the Téméraire. The impressionist thinks he has found in fiction a new psychological method unsuspected by the old masters. But if we are to swallow our emotions "neat" let us at least demand from the modern literary *chiffonnier* that we have them natural. But he will have none of this. He rings a most elaborate scheme of physical and psychical shocks, spasms, and surprises—sensations for sensation's sake, like Keats with the Cayenne pepper on his tongue to increase the flavour of the claret. It only serves to stir unreal and unrealized desires, and to stunt reality. The morality of the great writers is like the air on the Eildon hills—clear and bracing. Homer and Menander were great writers, but there is a great gulf between them, and the modern *fin-de-siècle* novelist is far from being a Menander.

The young man in a hurry—in literature and religion—has been at the bottom of all this. Genius has been "in revolt." Genius and respectability have declared to be in eternal and necessary opposition. Morality and Art were asymptotes, though to all the great men and minds of the past they had been declared to be necessary and synthetic. Byron canted a great deal in this way, and the figures of Lara and the Corsair seem to have haunted the imagination of the succeeding race, and we still hear the faint echo of the school that regarded monogamy as decadent, and long fought with blank unrealized hopes of "living up to" the back hair of the Roman emperor Elagabalus, and languidly regretted what they fondly regarded as the sane and rational sensuousness of Boccaccio and Bracciolini.

As we have said, we regard this reviving fame of Scott as a good sign. The novel is not a tract,—and the writers of the impressionist or doctrinaire schools surely only defeat their own aims by the confusion of two distinct provinces, and if they *do* "wish to see the wheels go round," they must, like Benjamin Franklin,

be prepared to deny themselves pleasure and pay for their whistle. By so doing, they write works that are devoid of all interest, their action is ever standing still, and has no beginning, middle, nor end.

Scott has been accused by the greatest of his countrymen who wrote on him, or, strangely enough, wrote him down, of not, in all his prose works, having given to the language a standard quotation or a familiar phrase. This defect, if defect it be, he will bear with Smollett, Richardson and Fielding, nor, perhaps, can Dumas, his nearest French parallel, escape the same censure. But they furnish characters and scenes—character not divorced from action; and character, as Aristotle said, can only be represented by characters in action. This was the conviction of Cervantes and Molière, but of late the anthropologist and the scientist have not been content to stay at home but have roamed afield in the domain of the great writers. We have too much of the "*English Men of Letters*" series, that serve as a glib and ready-reckoner style of knowledge to the people who read literature on literature and not the works themselves. The literary anthropologist is exploiting the Hottentot and the Sandwich Islander to find a parallel to the Siege of Troy or the death of Achilles. We are trying to bridge the gulf between the Kraal and the Parthenon, the Zulu and the Greek—and so the great writers, that themselves can alone create the taste by which they are to be enjoyed, suffer a temporary eclipse.

But the reign of artificiality and small men is drawing to a close. To know Sir Walter Scott is not a thing to be lightly ventured on if you are prepared wisely, with Ruskin, to read "every word." To fully know him, as Steele said of his wife, is a liberal education, best felt by those who can see the blaze of the sun sink on the Ochils; or when, rounding the passhead of the Trosachs at the corner of Loch Katrine they can see the Silver Strand and Ellen's Isle, and know that Shakespere and Cervantes can alone stand with Sir Walter Scott.

VIRTUTE L. CRESCO.

[La Rédaction désire témoigner ici de sa reconnaissance envers MM. Braassem, libraires-éditeurs, de Bruxelles, à l'obligeance desquels est due la reproduction de cette pièce.]

A Maurice Maeterlinck.

LA BAIGNEUSE.

MARION.

ELISE.

UNE PARTIE DE BATEAU.

LA BAIGNEUSE.

ISSACHAR.

(La scène représente une chambrette humblement mais convenablement meublée ; en face, la croisée grande ouverte donne sur une rivière qui coule immédiatement au-dessous ; plus loin s'étendent des prés que voile un brouillard argentin, lequel se dissipe de plus en plus durant le développement du drame ; plus loin encore, à droite, on entrevoit une autre partie de la rivière, qui fait un coude à un point invisible du théâtre. ELISE, mère d'Issachar, est assise dans un coin, à gauche, en face ; elle tricote. MARION, sa bru, est occupée à mettre la nappe pour le souper.)

MAR. Voulez-vous que j'allume les chandelles, mère ?

ELISE. Non, non, pas encore.

MAR. Pourquoi pas encore ? Quand voulez-vous que je les allume ?

ELISE. Quand Issachar sera rentré ; c'est dommage de les allumer avant de se mettre à table.

MAR. Mais vous n'y voyez plus.

ELISE. Si, si, j'y vois très bien ; et d'ailleurs, j'ai assez travaillé aujourd'hui.

MAR. Qu'il est tard.

ELISE. Quelle heure est-il ?

MAR. Dix heures et demie. Je m'étonne qu' Issachar ne vienne pas. *(Elle se met à la fenêtre.)* Jamais depuis que nous sommes mariés il n'a été si tard à rentrer. C'est sans doute le brouillard qui l'aura retenu. Comme ça a blanchi les prairies !

ELISE. Il y a un brouillard ?

MAR. Mais oui, ne voyez-vous pas ? Il me semble que c'est pire en amont. (*Un silence.*) Mère !

ELISE. Qu'y a-t-il ?

MAR. Voilà une lumière.

ELISE. Où la vois-tu ?

MAR. Sur l'eau, juste où le fleuve fait un coude...elle se meut. Ça doit être le ras d'Issachar.

ELISE. Mais il ne porte jamais de lanterne.

MAR. C'est vrai : il connaît si bien la rivière.

(*On commence à distinguer des voix qui chantent ; elles s'affirment à mesure que le bateau s'approche, jusqu'à ce qu'il passe sous la fenêtre. Il est plein de gens qui s'amuse sur l'eau.*)

LES VOIX.

A l'aube, à travers le bois sombre
(S. Yves, garde-nous de mal !)
Le jour naissant dessinait l'ombre
De son cheval.

MAR. Ce n'est donc pas Issachar.

LES VOIX.

A midi qu'il allait toujours
(Seigneur, garde-nous de Satan !)
L'ombre poursuivait les pas lourds
De la jument.

Mais point d'ombre de cavalier
(Saint Yves et Saint Honoré !)
Par le beau soleil reflété.

UN HOMME (*apercevant Marion à la fenêtre, la salue*).
Bonsoir.

MAR. Bonsoir. Avez-vous vu mon mari ?

L'HOMME. Non.

UNE FEMME. Si fait, nous l'avons bien vu. C'était dans la ville, avant de repartir.

MAR. Que faisait-il dans la ville ?

LA FEMME. Il buvait un coup d'eau-de-vie avec le vieux Nicolas et Marthe Vatras ; je me rappelle même lui avoir entendu dire qu'il faudrait rester

jusqu'à minuit, qu'il ne partirait pas dans une telle brouée.

MAR. Elle est très épaisse, la brouée ?

L'HOMME. Non ; il fait assez clair par ici, mais ça devient pire en remontant la rivière. Bonsoir, alors.

MAR. Bonsoir.

(Le bateau reprend sa course ; on chante encore.)

LES VOIX.

Mais point d'ombre de cavalier

(S. Yves et S. Honoré !)

Par le beau soleil reflété.

(MARION quitte la croisée et se remet à dresser la table.)

ELISE. Quel jour est-ce, aujourd'hui ?

MAR. C'est la veille de la Saint Yves.

ELISE. Ah ! *(Encore un silence. Soudain on entend le bruit d'une chute dans l'eau, tout près. MARION saute à la fenêtre.)*

MAR. A présent il faut que ce soit Issachar...Il est tout près. *(Bruit d'une chute dans l'eau.)* Issachar ! Le bateau paraît ne plus s'avancer. Ça sonne comme s'il était toujours au même endroit.

ELISE. Ce n'est pas Issachar.

MAR. Qu'est-ce que c'est, alors ?

ELISE. Ce n'est pas un bateau du tout.

MAR. Qu'est-ce ?

ELISE. C'est...Quel jour est-ce aujourd'hui, as-tu dit ?

MAR. La veille de la Saint Yves. Pourquoi ne répondez-vous pas ?

ELISE. La veille de la Saint Yves ! Donc, c'est elle !

MAR. Elle ! Qui ?

ELISE. La baigneuse.

MAR. La baigneuse...? Qu'est-ce que cela, de grâce ?

ELISE. Bien sûr que tu le sais. Ah ! j'oubliais ; il n'y a pas une année que tu es ici. C'est une femme...

MAR. Oui se baigne—à cette heure-ci ?

ELISE. Oui—la veille de la Saint Yves. Moi, je ne l'ai jamais vue.

MAR. Pourquoi la veille de la Saint Yves ?

ELISE. Parce que c'est alors qu'elle est morte.

MAR. Morte ? C'est donc un revenant.

ELISE. Qui...elle s'est noyée.

MAR. Pourquoi ?

ELISE. Parce qu'on l'avait séduite.

MAR. Qui ?

ELISE. C'est ce que personne ne sait. Il y a de ça une dizaine d'années, tu étais enfant. Elle s'appelait Rosa...Rosa...j'oublie son nom de famille. *(Bruit d'une chute dans l'eau.)* Elle était jeune, une fillette de dix-sept ans, peut-être. Son père et sa mère demeuraient tout près d'ici. Il était maçon. Ils ont changé de demeure peu après qu'elle s'est noyée...Quelques-uns disent qu'elle s'est jetée du pont, d'autres prétendent qu'elle est entrée tout droit dans l'eau, debout. C'est possible ; elle en était capable. On dit que si son âme venait à l'encontrer, lui, l'homme, qu'elle le tuerait. Elle était très passionnée, elle ne pardonnait pas.

(On entend encore la chute dans l'eau.)

MAR. C'est fort singulier...encore que je n'y croie pas le moins du monde. C'est-à-dire que je ne crois pas que ce soit elle là-bas. C'est sans doute la marée — ou un chien, peut-être. *(Silence : après peu—)* La brouée s'est dissipée par ici. Je voudrais qu' Issachar fût rentré. *(Un éclair.)* Oh ! l'éclair, avez-vous vu ? *(Soudain une voix d'homme qui chante se fait entendre de loin.)* Ah ! c'est lui enfin. Issachar ! Il ne m'entend pas encore. Issachar ! *(La réponse arrive à peine, très faible.)* Issachar ! que tu es tard.

ISS. Oui, il a fait un brouillard d'enfer...*(De plus près.)* Il y a quelque chose sur la route.

MAR. Dépêche-toi, Issachar ! *(Un grand bruit sur l'eau.)*

LA VOIX DU FANTÔME.

Viens à moi.

ISS. Jamais.

LA VOIX. Tu dois.

MAR. Ciel! Qu'est-ce? (*Une lueur subite montre la forme d'une femme qui se soulève dans l'eau et embrasse l'avant du ras.*)

LA VOIX. Tu dois. (MARION *se presse les tempes avec angoisse. Un bruit épouvantable, puis un cri. Ensuite silence. MARION s'est évanouie.*)

ELISE (*qui s'est levée, tombe à genoux en s'écriant*) O mon Dieu! mon Dieu! c'était mon fils!

(*Rideau.*)

AURÈLE LEGOND'HUIS.

THE BALLADE OF THE PEA-HEN.

"The pea-hen lays once in the year."

(*Arnold's Greek Exercises, 63.*)

How many a sentence is framed by the lip
 Of moralist, poet and sage,
 To tell of the slip 'twixt the cup and the lip,
 To warn a frivolous age!
 How I think as I turn the page
 Of sapient prophet or seer,
 La Rochefoucauld never emitted a gnome
 So telling and terse in its sibylline tone;
 You may search through the poets of Hellas and Rome,
 And search till you tire, as I fear,
 You never will find
 One more to your mind:
The pea-hen lays once in the year.

How crude and how trite is the classical saw
 Of the Rotterdam Latinist's pen:
Inter offam et os quam multum! The law
 To win the acceptance of men
 Must hit on a happier vein,
 If sinners the text will revere,—
 Yet Gay and the Curé of Meudon both fail,
 And Corduba's moralists really must pale
 His fires as he hopelessly tries to assail
 The task—for but withered and sere
 Is their prose or their verse
 By that mystic and terse
The pea-hen lays once in the year.

When Shakspeare remarks on the flow,
 The ebb, and the eddy and tide
 In man and his fortunes below—
 How often the current will glide
 Beyond him and strand him beside
 The shallows no more to appear—
 I vow that, in spite of the jeer and the frown
 Of critics, the laurel of victory's crown
 Must garland the brow of the sage that set down
 In language so telling and clear,
 So pensive and sweet
 Incisive and neat—
The pea-hen lays once in the year.

L'Envoy.

Prince, Potentate, Freshman or Peer,
 And Man, when "occasion you miss
 Of pith and of moment" on *this*
 Reflect, and abstain
 From regrets that are vain—
The pea-hen lays once in the year.

L.

CAUSERIES DU VENDREDI.**No. VI.—The Real Emerson.**

"I drank it, and say, 'Ah, look here, chummy, that is beer, that different stuff what you went and got t'mornin'.'"—*A Son of the Fens.*

THAT excellent and moral old kangaroo of a Yankee who had sense enough to help Carlyle and folly enough to try and argue Whitman out of plain speaking was not in any sense a man of letters. No more was the largely lamented prosier Whittier, nor is that most maiden-auntly of physicians Holmes. They don't breed men of letters in that "nameless land which is described as the United States of North America." They have a set of "introspecteurs" who "contemplate" their own empty idiotic lives in every futile fashion, they have a large caste of man-milliners, such as Stedman and Co., and a great number of gushing and barren females that rhyme; they have critics who are dissatisfied with Shakspeare

and try and trade him off in their annual hogcrop as Bacon. You must go south of "these states" for culture, to lands where Spanish is spoken and real poetry made and real dances danced and real life lived. Those huge hideous mushroom towns of U.S.A., given over to native architects and advertisements, are full of miserable nouveaux riches and yet more miserable persons, sad because they are not nouveaux riches too, as if they could do anything with their money when they got it, but waste it in selfish pleasureless and senseless ways. And their gods are like unto them, cheating speculators, perjured politicians, successful and pious dry-goods men, cowardly road-agents, smart editors and greasy pulpit-orators. What have such a people to do with literature? They left the one poet they ever produced, or are likely to produce, to die in poverty, they even did their best to defile his grave (though in this task, to our everlasting shame, a disgusting Englishman of the name of Watts proved himself a more ignoble and active muck-chucker than any of them). Poor Emerson! he had at least the consciousness (which the rest of the babbling Boston minnikins have never had) that all was not right in the "Great Western Republic." Once too on a pathetic occasion he wrote a sad and touching little piece of verse,—a great sorrow struck a spark of poetry out of his flint. But enough of this honest fellow and his hopeless common-place copybook stuff. He never was, and is not, this fleeting down east phantasm, this angular New England evanescence.

But, curiously enough, there is an Emerson, a real Emerson, a man who can write and does write, whose book, *A Son of the Fens*, is one of the English novels of this century. Realist, in that his subject is taken from simple, actual, infinite life, "drawn from the quicke;" impressionist, in that he strives for justice of tone, for the harmony that there always is in an aspect of nature, Mr. Emerson has given a simple record, autobiographic in form, of an East Anglian life, a hearty, wholesome, useful life, with the common ups and downs that befall

dozens of good east-country "mash men" and fishermen, but it is all somehow deeply interesting. You can fancy yourself, you cannot help fancying yourself sitting in the brick cottage by the mill over pipes and mugs of homebrewed as the plain man tells his plain tale, "backing and fetching," and "tacking down a long-reach," but still getting on, in that natural artless way, that is the perfection of art. The verisimilitude of the whole thing is almost magic: the unfolding of character is admirable and sure, the detail correct to an hair's breadth. Few such "documents" of English life have been put together, and it is a true idyll withal. Miss Dobree and Miss Ingram and Mrs. Riddell are artists all three, and they have written admirable records, but of lives that are not in the least idyllic,—cramped, mutilated, adulterated, civilized, middle-class lives; lives not lived but poorly shambled through. But this rough countryman's life is an idyll. And then Mr. Emerson never moralizes, he judges not, he is the true chronicler, he records as well as he can what is to be recorded and he leaves it. Nor does he cumber his drama with elaborate superfluous scenery, he is as free from the need of scene-painting as Homer or a Sagaman. The extraordinary force of the book is felt by a moment's comparison with the work of such worthy people as Blackmore. Beside *A Son of the Fens* how unreal, flat, sentimental, is a tale like *Lorna Doone*, and yet *Lorna Doone* has much more merit and labour in it than the vast bulk of English-made noveltry. Nor has Mr. Emerson the excited forced note which sometimes spoiled a fine page of Jeffries, or the hopeless bitterness that scarred Runciman's best work. He is not feverish, he reminds one of Vallés at his best, he has the same idiomatic aptness of phrase, definite clear memory, restraint, accurate adjustment of colour, and unprejudiced sympathy. Mr. Emerson has worked hard at his East Anglian, his earlier tales are often careful, accurate, poetic, drastic, but this *Son of the Fens* is a little masterpiece. Into that worshipful company of immortals

created by man there has entered one Dick Windmill, and his pardner Jo and his wife Jenny are with him. "Night you go, old Dicka!"

F. Y. P.

A DILEMMA AND A FALLACY.

CHAPTER I.

SOME cutlets under a tin cover were drying up furiously before a roaring fire. The July sunlight kept darting into the blue room in languid streaks; on the fireshell stood a few faded fritillaries, and the dust shimmered on the plain walls. Books littered the floor, and a few paper-cutters lay among them like pale, frozen snakes. A lack of motion everywhere—only relieved by the hoarse whisper of the scout in the rooms opposite and the drowsy flapping of the blind.

One would have said that the owner of the rooms was still asleep. It was past eight o'clock. . . .

The guest yawned, and took up a book bound in pigskin, with a few lent-lilies meandering on the cover.

"Shall I wake him?" he said to himself, as he fluttered the leaves. "The cutlets will be leather in a quarter of an hour."

An angry splash from the bedroom seemed to answer him. In another moment a door opened, and his host entered, clad lightly in a large bath-towel and holding a corkscrew in his hand.

"Hullo—Sneerson!" he said wearily. "You here? I must have a drink,"—and he leisurely began to open a bottle of lemonade. "Two dolts and a fool made me play whist till three this morning, and I feel—I feel . . . !"

"Is anyone else coming?" asked Sneerson.

"Only Briggs and Philpott. I expect they'll be here directly. Ah! I'm better now. I'll be with you in the throwing-on of a trouser. Have an olive?"

Sneerson took one dubiously. Beere, delighted to

see his friend suffering torments from the stone, crackled from his shirt.

"Sitting up till three takes the core out of one, doesn't it?"

Sneerson said nothing, but wished the olive had been one of the dolts. In a few minutes Beere came into the room again. He was dressed this time, and was smoking a cigarette.

"You have heard about De Launville, I suppose?" he said, as he sank into a low armchair.

"No; what?" said Sneerson.

"He's been sent down for proposing to Polly at the ball."

"The fat one? or is it the one with the cherry hair? I never remember twins."

"The one with the cherry hair—though I don't think it's cherry. The Master was very sick about it. De Launville was perfectly screwed at the time, though!"

"I should think so. But drunk—why, I've never seen him touch anything."

"He doesn't; but he did at the ball all the same. But I sha'n't wait for the others. No! don't touch the cutlets. I'll make you an omelette in a minute."

Eo consilio, Beere began to crash some eggs into a basin, and gave his guest some parsley to chop. The scout now came into the room, and in bland indifference to all cooking preparations, put the cutlets on the table, took off the covers and brought in the coffee.

"You needn't wait, Padding; and—we sha'n't want the cutlets," said Beere.

"Garlic?" was his next remark.

"Humph!" said Sneerson.

"Of course I shall only rub the pan."

"Rub away."

* * * * *

"Very good—reminds one of a foreign omelette: the native animal generally tastes of dry rot."

"Well, but about De Launville?"

A knock.

"*You*, De Launville? We were just discussing you over an omelette."

"Well—they've sent me down," said the fat, rather fine-looking man who had just come in. "I don't know that I care much. I begin to hate dons. If there is one class of men more despicable than the undergraduate as such, it is the don as such. I have been 'mister'd' and 'my dear De Launville'd' and governing-body'd till I am sick of it. . . . I told the Master I had never touched wine since I was fourteen, and that *good* champagne—he absolutely twinkled when I mentioned what brand they had given us—wouldn't have upset me. . . Oh! I am sick of it all—their discipline, which is a system of espionage—their friendship, always on the look-out for a lord and a living—their religion, which is not of Christianity but of the Queen and the College. But I am boring you. Never mind—I *will* go on. I have sweated day and night to keep body and soul and battels together; I never ask a creature to my rooms, because I can't even offer him a cigarette; I have worked *hard* to live on my scholarship—and an ass with a 'reverend' to his name and a prig in his soul walks off with eight pounds a term for talking twaddle to me for half-an-hour a week; and every soul in this cursed place, from the scout to the dean, is bent on squeezing out my last shilling to pay some—due, or fee, or—Yes, I *am* sent down; but—don't breathe this to a living soul—I *might* stay."

"How?" burst out Beere and Sneerson together.

"By *marrying* Polly!" said De Launville with a bitter laugh.

(*To be continued.*)

BIRDS OF PASSAGE.

WHENEVER I want to feel in touch with the outside world, I leave my resting place at Cairo or Tintah and go by sea from Alexandria to Port Said. Arrived here

I appropriate a special corner of the verandah at the Hôtel Continental to my particular uses, making of it my home for a week or ten days.

The town of Port Said is unlovely and to the casual stranger uninteresting, but to any one who is willing to sojourn here for a time it is full of motley charm. Here it is that travellers from all parts of the world stay for a night, give me the benefit of their acquaintance for a few hours and disappear once more into the void. Hard worked missionaries from the Indies and China hurrying for a richly earned holiday into Syria, globe trotters who have done Egypt in a week and are off by the next P. & O. to Bombay or the Colonies, where they intend to "put in" a month or two, officers bound for their regiments in Colombo or Madras, commercial travellers eager to desecrate oriental palaces and mosques with Manchester woven goods and lamps of Birmingham, rich Americans speculating on the "good time" they intend to have in Jerusalem,—birds of passage all, who perch beside me for a moment and twitter a few brief nothings before they fly away. There is no opportunity of being bored here, for a chance acquaintance need never bore one, and nobody stops long enough to become uninteresting.

Sometimes I find myself discussing the advancement of Christianity among the Mahommedans; at others I am busy giving information about the canal or the snipe shooting under the Pyramids, with a boldness that surprises me when I consider my ignorance of these matters. A new conversation starts up every night, and debateable points acquire a great interest because there is never time to work to a conclusion.

Then the inhabitants of the town are queer studies. Birds of passage too, though their stay is sometimes measured by years. Birds of passage at any rate in hope, since no one cares to contemplate remaining here for ever. The boots, a Cypriote, has been engaged at the hotel for two years past. He talks cheerfully of making his fortune. He would be ill pleased with me

if I doubted the possibility, in spite of his bare feet and ragged coat. So I give him cigars and encouragement, and I have promised to visit him in Cyprus when he has filled his purse.

The Arabs here are fortune seekers in their way, and the donkeys suffer severely from their mania. Their legs seem never tired of running all day behind the jaded brutes when many ships are in port and business is brisk. Alas, the Arab character is spoiled by the atmosphere of the town. It is scarcely possible to believe oneself in the East; the fine cunning, for which "oriental diplomacy" is not too dignified a term, has given place to a vulgar Western greed and 'cuteness. The courtesy of their original manners is decayed, and there is a cockney familiarity in their behaviour, and almost a cockney vulgarity in their speech.

The native quarter is a hell, and even in appearance the place is only a theatrical Eastern town; the pantomime city of Ali Baba and Ala-ed-din. The evils of the East are indeed not hidden, but the luxury and languour that can alone lend them any charm is absent.

But it is interesting by its very strangeness and nastiness, this town of Port Said; an unwholesome place, to come out of which unsoiled gives one all the pleasure of living in the midst of an epidemic and not taking the disease.

Then the constantly changing aspect of the canal has a fascination for British ship-loving eyes. Moored up against the Syrian shore are some twenty "coal-tramps," their black furnaces sending forth long streams of smoke over the desert, their outlines hidden in the dust that hangs round them, a golden dust at times, and almost beautiful when the sunbeams glance upon it. From my verandah corner I can see great steamers ploughing through the surf beyond the lighthouse, the silver trail of their screws gleaming on the waters long after they have passed from sight; or I can watch the pilot boats scudding to meet the incoming vessels bound for all the strange ports of Asia. Then, again, I can

see the masts of ships rising, like leafless palms, above the desert, till as they approach nearer, their prows and sides become visible, apparently gliding over the sands. And when evening draws in and the sudden darkness falls over the town, the harbour is ablaze with flaming torches waving in the fresh night wind, and the men on the coal rafts seem like strange legendary people as they dive in and out of the ships' sides, the glow of the flames illumining their brown sweating bodies, while their mystic song rises above the shrill cries of the streets, the lapping of the waters, and the fiddles of the music hall next door. Suddenly, as though day were born again for a brief moment, the whole scene is clarified by the electric search-light of a steamer leaving her moorings, and seeking her course through the darkness.

Two very special episodes have marked this last visit of mine. One morning I was awakened at sunrise by the firing of guns, and a huge Russian ironclad floated up to the quay, her decks thronged with sailors and marines. She stayed three days, and every afternoon a band played on her quarter-deck. Ten minutes before sunset her yards were manned, and the grand battle hymn of the Czars resounded through the harbour, then as the sun fell behind the town the valorous strains melted into the soft sad chords of the *Adeste Fideles*, and the whole of the crew doffed their caps, and accompanied the instruments with strong fresh voices. As the music ceased the ensign was lowered, the guns thundered, and there was silence.

During the visit of the Russian flag-ship an English "trooper" came through the desert, crowded with soldiers going home. A priest attended by his acolytes stood waiting on the wharf. When the vessel cast anchor a boat was lowered, and from it landed a company of soldiers, four of whom bore a coffin covered with the Union Jack. A solemn procession started down the street towards the Catholic cemetery, led by the priest bearing a cross and the acolytes swinging

their censers of incense. In the tiny burial ground the brave soldier was laid to rest, a bird of passage killed during his flight, and as we arrived again in front of the hotel, the Russians' band was playing the war song of the Czars.

The other episode was not less sad, and happened only yesterday. A long black dirty steamer, on whose decks squatted crowds of half clad, famished looking men, passed on her eastward way. It was again a Russian vessel, bearing convicts and soldiers to Siberia.

These, too, were birds of passage, but birds of passage for the last time.

Port Said.

PERCY ADDLESHAW.

THE CALL-BOY.

Read my ruse and peruse my rede ;

Here is a plan

For a reading man ;

A present shift in the hour of need.

I HAVE an enemy—who hath not ?

Yet not an enemy (there's the rub) ;

He is my *friend*, vexatious cub :

Hinc illae lacrimae, hence this plot.

Gentle Reader, you know The Bore,

The adhesive caller, importunate friend

Whose visit comes not with his talk to an end,

Who only hath use for one side of your door ?

He who will use my sure recipe,

Never shall try "another way" ;

Use my prescription without delay,

And with ordinary care the cure's complete.

Strolling leisurely down the High,

I heard a sound to split the ear ;

Painfully shrill, and enginely clear,

Came a street urchin whistling by.

"Fly, small boy, to Brasenose fly,

Ask for Jarley's rooms at the Lodge,"

(*Hear my device, my golden dodge!*),

"Go to the man within," quoth I ;

" Burst thy small fiend's pipe in his ear,
Whistle with might and main till he drop,
Split me his tympanum ere you stop,
And you shall be paid for your pains, d'you hear ? "

Off he went while yet I spoke,
Back he came in a half-hour's space,
Back he came quite black in the face :
" I've done it," he said, " but it weren't no joke."

" No particulars, boy, 'tis done " :
Half-a-crown for his pains I gave,
Bound him to me, a willing slave,
To do the same thing to any one.

* * . * *

Jarley was never the same again,
Never was seen to call or smile ;
I believe he died in a little while
Perfectly mad, but free from pain.

This was quite an exceptional case,
The dose applied need not be so strong :
Half-an-hour (and a popular song)
Would fell an ox in the market-place.

O. T. M.

"GRANITE DUST."

Fifty Poems by Ronald Campbell Macfie.

WHAT is the safest sign of promise in a new poet ? It is difficult to say. The thought of poetry as a criticism of life is apt to make us look especially at the substance. Has the new poet depth and originality of thought, strength and fervour of passion, a vivid and wide ranging imagination ? Now certainly all these things must be present to some degree in every poet, and the *δύναμις* of them must be in the youngest singer, and yet as a fact the earliest poems of some of the greatest poets—Milton and Shakespeare and Tennyson—have not had these qualities for their most striking characteristics. Perhaps the converse may be true too. When a young poet's verse is overweighted with thought or

charged with a great seriousness of passion and strikingly imaginative, it is often only in one or two of the poems that this is noticeable, and perhaps in the end the young author finds a fitter sphere in fiction or some branch of prose art.

It is the form that is unique and striking in the early work of the poets we have named. They are like young giants who have found that they can wield thunderbolts and delight to experiment with them. The powers of fancy and expression are their thunderbolts. They delight in bold attempts in metre—that shall at all costs however be musical—and in figurative and allusive expression. The poet is not alone the man of imagination and feeling, but of the power to express himself, and this is the earliest perfected power. Only time and life can deepen his emotions and enlarge his imaginative vision.

This is why the present volume has filled every true lover of poetry with hope. Poetry of greater force and appeal has appeared this same year in Mr. Kipling's "*Barrack Room Ballads*," but Mr. Kipling's work is mature in thought and feeling, while Mr. Macfie's has all that delight in its own music, and in far-fetched and allusive fancies and modes of expression which are the characteristic notes of Tennyson's "*Juvenilia*," and the "*Venus and Adonis*," and yet among them are poems of strong and massive feeling simply and directly expressed. Mr. Macfie has almost achieved, before intruding upon readers, perfection in technique, and has given promise of thought and feeling that it is for the years to make good.

We shall first illustrate shortly the musical sweetness and the bold imaginative treatment of which we have spoken. Here is a verse or two from a love poem in which quite distinctly the love note is subordinate to the pictorial and artistic interest.

Thunder with loosened limbs lay huddled in a swoon,
Lightning had slunk away. There was never a stir in the air.
The trees stood still as of motionless marble hewn,

Save one high branch that was bent before the moon
 By the corpse of an Absalom wind hanging heavily by the hair.
 Then my love took harp: and her fingers flashed on the
 golden strings:
 Each hand like a living soul conscious and white and free:
 Now fleet as flame and prophetic of storm and strenuous
 things,
 Now impotently beating as beat the tortured wings
 Of a wounded gull outstretched on the wave of a golden sea

The almost violently imaginative tone of the first
 verse here is noticeable also in the "Dying-day o
 Death,"

About his temples sinuous serpent veins
 Seemed writhing: and his lips were thin and starven;
 While by the chisel of a myriad pains
 His great brow-dome was carven.

the "Shadow of a Cross," "Loveland," the first
 verse of "A Day in June,"

The sun was zenith high. A lifeless cloud
 Lay in the west
 Like a dead angel lying in a shroud
 With lilies on her breast.

and in the vigorous—with a touch of the "grotesque"
 —"King Death,"

Ha! ha! none dare marry me
 Chuckled the king called Death,
 As rattling his royal ribs together,
 He danced himself out of breath.

Ha! ha! none dare marry me,
 Sang he, thrumming his sickle;
 None of the women so wondrously fair,
 Wondrously fair and fickle.

Ha! ha! I dared marry thee,
 Laughed the maiden love;
 I heard thy boast and hastened here,
 From the land of light above.

Ha! ha! I dare marry thee,
 Even now we will wed;

And she kissed his brow and his beard and his eyes,
And Death as she kissed fell dead.

Other of the poems as the "Shadow of a Cross," "Depart," "A Pageantry of Mist," have the young poet's love for embodying in imaginative form rare elusive moments of personal experience that seem to give a glimpse of deeper than usual insight. The chief charm of these is their imaginative and musical presentation; but often they will strike in this or that breast a sympathetic note that gives them a deeper interest. This is the class to which so much of Shelley's poetry belongs.

But the best of Mr. Macfie's work are the poems in which the expression is most simple and direct, the feeling appealed to most intelligible and common to the human heart. Among these are his best love poems, the passionate "Kisses,"

White eyelids tremble on thine eyes,
Dark lashes quiver on thy cheek;
Thy passive lips dispart with sighs,
But never speak.

O love of mine what thoughts hast thou?
What thoughts make tumult in thy brain?
When on thy mouth and hair and brow
My kisses rain.

the beautiful sonnets "The Lyre," and "White Heather," and the subtle and delicate "Polemic" ending—

Hearts are thy playthings; is it not so
O coquette?
But when we get love we do not know
The gift we get;
Hearts are thy playthings—here is mine!
Why thine eyes are wet!
Love is holy and divine
O coquette!

Of that word-painting—the greatest master of which in our language has just been laid in the Abbey—we have two very delicate and exquisite examples: "A Day in June," [slightly marred by violences] of the sort we

have mentioned] and "An October Eve," almost faultless in the feeling it conveys of a late autumn evening among the purple hills, under the cold darkening sky and by some rushing river in Scotland.

In the poems that might come under the heading "Criticism of Life," there is nothing of the decadent tone, rather the religious emotion predominates, and a strong note of ethical optimism.

In the dim future, when the spray is blown
 From the near Jordan in our hair and eyes,
 Shadows will shew the stars that have been strown
 Over blue heaven till we realise
 How there are things invisible, unknown
 Beyond the skies.

We could quote much from Mr. Macfie, and dwell with pleasure on many sides of his work, for we have a presentiment that it will not soon die. When so much slipshod stuttering and sputtering verse is poured out on us in magazines and collections of sonnets, an artist in metre and expression who has been severe and exacting with himself is a welcome discovery. How much more is this the case when we find behind the artist passion and imagination, a rich and ripening character. We shall delight ourselves by quoting, to close with, a poem that hangs about the memory like the fragrance of a flower—

Alas, alas, eheu
 That the sky is only blue,
 To gather from the grass
 The rain and dew !

Alas, that eyes are fair ;
 That tears may gather and there
 Mist and the breath of sighs
 From the marsh of care !

Alas, alas, eheu
 That we meet but to bid adieu ;
 That the sands in time's ancient glass
 Are so swift and few.

Alas, alas, eheu !

That the heart is only true
To gather where false feet pass
The thorn and rue.

HOC SECURIOR.

SONG.

SHE came like a falling star,
Sudden, and swift, and bright,
From the heaven of heavens afar
On the wilderness of night.

She came like a falling star,
Flashed by, and was no more ;
But the wilderness where lost lovers are
Is darker than before.

O.T.M.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editors of "The Spirit Lamp."

GENTLEMEN,—I have read a good deal lately in some of the new Oxford papers of the "opening" there is for a paper "run on the lines of the Cambridge *Granta*." I am sorry to say it is true that there is such an opening, but it is also true that there is an excellent opening for a paper which might be readable without being sporting, and literary without becoming priggish. In plain language, the small success your paper has obtained is owing to an attempt to get the literary merit of its authors recognized by a Philistine world through a system of personal attacks on those with whom they disagree. I conceive that it is not necessary for a "literary paper" to be offensive at the expense of "sporting" men, and that it would be better to produce a few good poems or essays than to criticise dead authors without having read them, and to abandon good taste in so doing in favour of "cheap" witticisms.

If you would adopt these very vague suggestions you would have more subscribers and fewer enemies.

I enclose my card, and am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

CATSPA.W.



The Spirit Lamp.

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Nov. 4, 1892.

TO T. S. K.

THE long, long night of storm and strife is past,
Alike the grasses spring o'er friend and foe,
And thou, brave heart, whose voice out-trod the blast—
Whose kindling thought made every beacon glow ;

O friend, who wouldst my future work forecast,
Pointing this idle pen to higher things—
In these poor songs to thee I still cling fast.

I read, and lo, thy clarion voice still rings,
And in mine own refrain, it is thy thought that sings.

1867.

BRET HARTE.

A DILEMMA AND A FALLACY.

CHAPTER II.

DE LAUNVILLE was engaged.

Not to Polly, the Master's daughter. No; De Launville had been foolish, and had fallen in love (for the second time) with a Miss Helen Vassall, a girl with an impossible aunt and a faultless complexion. After having once seen her you could never forget that her eyes were blue and her teeth extremely white, that her hair had bits of gold in it and that the only thing she wanted seemed to be a good gown. She could most certainly dance till three in the morning and play tennis till the racket dropped out of her hand; but for all that she was neither an athlete nor a doll.

When De Launville proposed she didn't swoon and she didn't sob hysterically over his coat, but looked intensely pleased and happy, put two white, rather fat, hands confidently into his, and said she thought they really loved one another, and that it was an enormous pity neither of them had one penny to rub against another. Then he kissed her, and after both had agreed that lovemaking was not nearly so awkward as it used to be, discovered that tea was after all a removeable feast and that as aunt Jemima was doing a little shopping in the Hammersmith Road there was no objection to their taking a longish turn in the opposite direction.

Aunt Jemima was not interesting; she had a starved, yellow throat, and always wore garnets in the afternoon, but she could cook like a *cordons bleu* and had a knack of dropping her final g's which Hammersmith grew to think was "so ladylike" that it gave up being jealous of her garnets and called on her in a body.

CHAPTER III.

THE interview that De Launville had described to his friends had been followed by another in which the Master had given him to understand, delicately but unmistakably, that he must either consent to an engagement with his daughter or go down.

Now De Launville had a mother, and he therefore felt himself in a very difficult position. Either he must go down and thereby resign all chances of a fellowship, to get which had been his sole object in coming up to Oxford, or resign his liberty and his *fiancée* together. If he did the first his old mother who was almost entirely dependent on him must ultimately be ruined; if he did the second . . . but De Launville was a gentleman. He fought hard with himself and his love, but to no purpose. He could *not* go back to his mother with the miserable story of his drunkenness and disgrace. He must save her at all costs. Neither could he write or tell his blue-eyed Helen that he had given her up. The answer she would have made him, had he done so, was as plain to him as if he held the letter in his hand—"don't bother about me, Harry; your first duty is to your mother." But he did mind, and he couldn't do it.

And this was the dilemma.

CHAPTER IV.

IT was a few minutes before six on the day before De Launville's wedding with Polly the Master's daughter.

A cab had just stopped before the gate of — College. Two ladies got out and began to walk quickly across the outer quadrangle. The cab rattled off.

"I can't wait, Aunt Jemima," said the younger of the two. "Remember Harry's rooms, number iv. 3 in the inner quad."

Helen Vassall ran up the stone staircase and tapped quickly at the door of De Launville's sitting-room.

"Come in," said a smothered voice from the bedroom, "I'll be with you in a minute; I'm just shaving."

"Oh, Harry," was all Helen could say, "Do be quick—something awful has happened."

De Launville put down his razor to rush into the room, but a second consideration made him stop.

Helen ! . . .

Helen *knew something*—everything. Helen was there in the next room—and *Polly was waiting dinner for him at the Master's*. His hand shook as he went on shaving, and he cut himself more than once. How ghastly and lined his own face looked in the glass!

On the point of finishing he caught the sound of low sobbing, and unable to bear the suspense any longer, wiped the soap from off his face and pushed hurriedly in, just as he was.

"Oh, Harry, Harry," said Helen as he came near her, "Your mother . . ."

De Launville crushed her to him and kissed her passionately. Then reading a new terror in her eyes he thrust her back. . . .

He had forgotten all about Polly now.

"Mother, mother!" he stammered out dazedly—"what do you mean? Is she ill?"

"Very ill," said Helen, "Oh Harry, my poor boy."... And De Launville knew all.

CHAPTER V.

THE early six o'clock dinner at the Master's was not a success.

De Launville, fresh from the news of his mother's death, had naturally enough forgotten all about it. Presently however the odious thought of his engagement occurred to him, and the words "Remember to dine with us at six, Remember to dine with us at six" kept ringing in his ears like some devilish refrain. He was too completely stunned to see the awfulness of dining out the very day of his mother's death. And then Helen was there. Every minute he remained in the same room with her was an agony. Did she or did she not know how he had betrayed her?—so uselessly too since his mother was dead after all. Dead, dead, dead! How the words burnt into his heart! . . .

Aunt Jemima's arrival a little after six (she had mistaken the staircase) finally decided him. He could

not face that awful woman with her stony eyes and terrible questions and still more terrible condolings.

He rushed out of his rooms into the air. Outside he caught the gleam of the lights at Dr. Browne's, and with a vague idea of warmth and comfort he sprang up the steps and rang the bell. . . .

No; the dinner at the Master's was not a success. De Launville arrived twenty minutes late; but they had waited for him. Polly in a smart, and utterly unbecoming green gown looked as if she had been crying, and the Master was a little tetchy at having been kept waiting. There was a general feeling of electricity about everybody, and Dr. Browne's *Amen* at grace was not reassuring. . De Launville was positively chalky in the face, but in the faint rose-coloured light it was scarcely noticeable. Nobody said much, and Polly sent away her soup. De Launville who was sitting next to her found himself saying the Lord's Prayer over and over again to himself, under his breath; and when Polly made a remark or glanced at him, he was immensely relieved at seeing by her face that his answer had not been one of the seven petitions. After each interruption, he felt he *must* begin the Prayer all over again; and a cold nightmare sweat grew on his brow at the thought that he might forget the beginning and *have to stop altogether*. Then he knew he should go mad and swear or scream out some gibberish to the silent ghastly dinner-table.

He got away early on some lame excuse. As he kissed Polly a heavy tear fell on his hand, and he found himself repeating: "But deliver us from evil."

He did not look back again as he went off, or he would have seen Polly standing in the shadow of the door, weeping as if her heart would break.

When his scout called him the next morning he handed him a note from the Master, that ran as follows:

"My dear De Launville,

The sudden illness of an old and valued friend has called my daughter Mary away on the very eve of her

marriage with you. I need hardly say that all arrangements for the wedding have been put off, as Mary goes by the nine o'clock train to-morrow morning, to nurse her old friend.

"I remain,

"Yours very sincerely,

"CLARENCE BROWNE.

"She wishes very much to see you for a few minutes before she starts."

De Launville's ghastly face and agitated manner at dinner the night before had finally told her what she had known long before, but had refused to recognise: that he did not and never could care for her. Polly had persuaded her father to allow her to go to Madeira for a time, and had conveniently caused an old friend to fall ill. Somehow, she looked almost pretty in her travelling gown, and when she put up her face gravely to De Launville and said entreatingly: "Just kiss me once, Harry, for the last time—*once as if you really loved me*,"—he was so much relieved by her decision, and yet so much touched by her loving him well enough to give him up, that Polly was almost satisfied.

And this was the fallacy.

The news of the engagement and its rupture had reached Helen and her aunt over their tea and toast at the "Sandown," long before De Launville had had time to realize it completely himself.

* * * * *

But Harry managed somehow to square matters with Helen, and he got his fellowship after all.

And this is the end of a fallacy and a dilemma.

SANDYS WASON.



WALT WHITMAN. (I.)

IT is a little more than six months since Walt Whitman passed almost unnoticed into his grave; not loaded with honours and crowned with laurel; notorious rather than famous; hated by some but for the most part ignored. America, so far from recognising in him the truest and deepest exponent of her spirit, so far from seeing in his poems the first great chapter of her literature or a new found voice to express all that she has hitherto hoarded up in silence, turned him out to starve, stoning having gone out of fashion. In England he found from the first more sympathisers but he has never been popular. He is still, so to speak, in quarantine even here.

It would be useless, until he is more widely known and appreciated, to attempt to give any final estimate of his poetry or to assign him any place even among the poets of this century. But the chief interest of his poems for us does not depend on that—in fact is not a mere literary interest at all. It lies in this that he is on his own estimate—and we must at least consider that, even if we refuse to accept it—more of a prophet than a poet; that he is the pioneer and harbinger of a new society, and the first voice of a new speech of which the future will bring fuller utterance.

“Poets to come! orators, singers, musicians to come!
Not to-day is to justify me and answer what I am for,
But you, a new brood, native, athletic, continental, greater
than before known,
Arouse, for you must justify me!”

Political life in any true sense of the word began in modern Europe with the advent of democracy, *i.e.* with the French Revolution. The cry of liberty, equality, fraternity, was then the standard and rallying ground of all who were working for or looking forward to the progress of mankind. It was not only a password to them but a creed which seemed at once to

sum up all the past and open a new vista for the future. To the poets especially it seemed as if the golden age of the world had already dawned. But in France—and it was to France that all men looked for the development of the new ideas—in France the work of destroying the old institutions of oppression once begun carried everything before it. Democracy came to be synonymous with anarchism, with blind and wanton uprooting of everything permanent, with the complete severance from the past traditions and growth of humanity which seemed to be the sole aim of those who then were called its champions. Democracy was established not so much as a living principle, embodying the new ideas from which it had arisen, but rather as a patched up fabric from the relics of the revolution—what was left after everything tangible had been destroyed. The French Revolution really asserted no principles whatever; it was purely negative and destructive, clearing the ground for a new structure which has never yet been built or planned. Hence, serious and profound thinkers like Wordsworth turned away from it, finding that the freedom and fraternity which it offered was but a specious delusion.

Since then we have got democracy or at least an approximation to it; but liberty and equality are yet far from us, and fraternity has lost its meaning and become a byeword. It has removed disabilities and broken down class privileges, but it has not produced the universal brotherhood of mankind; nor even the community of interests and sympathies among the citizens of a state. It has not furnished a new inspiration to art or philosophy nor has it found any distinctive expression for itself. On the contrary, art and literature and philosophy have lived almost entirely in the past and so have tended more and more to become a mere mechanic exercise of culture and education and to stand apart from the life of the multitude.

In Walt Whitman democracy has found a voice and

an interpreter. In his poetry the idea of "humanity" is stripped of all the platitudes which generations of writers and theorists have gathered about it and appears as a real thing, and a thing which to him is the central fact of the world. He puts aside all disguises of wealth, rank, reputation, as mere trappings of the true self. Each in his place and for himself is of infinite value, is to himself the explanation of all development, the centre of all space and time—"an acme of things accomplished, an encloser of things to be." And the ideal of democracy is a society where each is conscious of this in himself and is able by the gift of sympathy to find the same infinite value in his fellow-men. There no one is subject, whether in mind or body, to anything human or divine, for each is to himself the greatest and divinest thing of all.

"I say no man has ever yet been half devout enough,
None has ever yet adored or worshipped half enough,
None has begun to think how divine he himself is and how
certain the future is."

Not the heroes and great ones of the earth but the average man, at whom we that are unregenerate are apt to scoff, is the poet's theme. The young man of sound strong body and clear untroubled mind, who can wield the hammer or the axe or the trowel or any one out of the endless lists of tools on which he so lovingly dwells; the healthy domestic woman—these are his ideals. But he rejects none. His song is the Song of the Open Road along which all may go. He is the poet not of the good only but of the evil also, of the criminal, the diseased, the mean, and the commonplace, judging "not as the judge judges but as the sun falling round a helpless thing."

"The great masters and Kosmos are well as they go, the
heroes and good-doers are well,
The known leaders and inventors and the rich owners and
pious and distinguished may be well,
But there is more account than that, there is strict account
of all.

The interminable hordes of the ignorant and wicked are not nothing,
The barbarians of Africa and Asia are not nothing,
The perpetual successions of shallow people are not nothing
as they go."

There never was a more human-hearted poet than Whitman. It is no mere theory of equality or toleration that we find in his poems, no vague meaningless talk about the brotherhood of man—a phrase which we have come to regard with just suspicion. For the casual passer-by or the unknown man in the crowd he has a wealth of sympathy and love compared with which most of our sentimental love poetry is mere vapour. To read his poetry is enough to convince one of this. It has a fervour and sincerity that comes from the heart. We should remember too that it is not the work of a man who lived all his life apart from his fellow-men, nursing his genius like a being from another sphere, but of a man who spent his life in the open, associating with the highest or the lowest with equal dignity and grace; who went through the Civil War nursing the wounded soldiers with a devotedness and tender affection such as the world has rarely seen; who bore an old age of poverty, sickness and contempt without a murmur. Many of our poets who have been loud in their professions of human sympathy have been in reality the most exclusive in their life and opinions. Whitman mourns alike over the dead President and the dead prostitute in the mortuary with like passionate grief.

An ill-natured reviewer, I am told, once said of Whitman that he was "a man who tried to strike out a new line in poetry but who had found himself compelled to fall back on what has been the theme of poetry since it began to be—Love and Death." It seems to me that it is just in his treatment of these themes that Whitman is original and that therein consists his chief greatness.

As he recognises no distinction of rank in men and

things, so neither will he believe that one part of himself was made to honour and another to dishonour, or that any natural change or process should be thought loathsome or repulsive. He does not look forward to death as the slave to his liberation nor as the gate to eternal happiness. He has too real a grip of the present to drop the substance of this life for the shadow of a better to come. Nor does he shrink from it in horror though he does not try to hide its gruesome livery. He feels that it is part of his nature and as such is prepared to walk out with it. He will not throw his body to be devoured while his soul slips by, for to him "the soul is not more than the body; the body is not more than the soul." The present in itself is to him an eternity. He does not look back to a beginning in the past nor forward to a "far off divine event" in the future—

"I have heard what the talkers were talking, the talk of the
beginning and the end,

But I do not talk of the beginning or the end.

There was never any more inception than there is now

Nor any more youth or age than there is now

And will never be any more perfection than there is now

Nor any more heaven or hell than there is now."

Since the eternal mysteries were discovered by the Germans our modern poets have been too ready to grovel in the dust before them, to renounce their own individuality out of respect for some mist-begotten Infinite in which it is their aspiration to be merged. When they raise a voice of question at all it is only to proclaim their own weakness and insignificance. They put off the dignity of their manhood to throw themselves as it were on the mercy of this awful shadow, in the suppliant guise of childhood as

"An infant crying in the night

An infant crying for the light

And with no language but a cry."

But Walt Whitman is no infant; he is a man and knows it. He is a living man with all the strength he will ever have—if he is not to speak out now when will he speak?

"I will confront these shows of day and night.
I will know if I am to be less than they.
I will see if I am not as majestic as they.
I will see if I am not as subtle and real as they.
I will see if I have no meaning while the houses and ships
have meaning.
I will see if the fishes and birds are to be enough for them-
selves and I am not to be enough for myself,

"Why who makes much of a miracle?" he cries "the whole earth is full of miracles, and you and I are miracles just as much as any of them."

Such is the spirit which must inspire democracy if it is to do anything for men at all. If it is to stop short at equality of franchise; if it does not realise some such idea it is a mere shift of the burden and only a temporary relief.

We should wrong Whitman, however, if we supposed that *Leaves of Grass* is a political treatise. It is not an argued exposition but a living presentation of great ideas. But the subtle essence of poetry as it passes through the prosy mind of the critic becomes "subdued to what it works in," and when he sets before you the meaning which he has extracted from it it seems a very dull and lifeless thing indeed. And so it is with Whitman; there is much in him besides his political and social theories as we hope to show on a future occasion.

D.



THE BATHOS OF BATHING.

THE *Cold Bath* (daily) is perhaps an unique example of a new institution becoming venerable as soon as born. Even now-a-days people have not much respect for a young peerage or a young periodical; County councils and South American republics still labour under the disadvantage of a noviciate to complete; and it is only those who are at the age of promise who do not look on Count Mattei's Remedies and "Aristotle's" Constitution of Athens with supreme suspicion. With daily baths it was never so. Not many decades since, some obscure officials of Madras and Bombay, who had taken to tubbing for their comfort in a hot climate, introduced the practice as a monstrously diverting joke into Great Britain. People at home took up the experiment seriously; the nation discovered that their ancestors had lived like hogs; and from that time forth—

"India capta ferum victorem cepit, et undas
Intulit"

Are reputations so lightly won and so little tested likely to be undying? We think not. On the contrary, there are signs of a growing spirit of rebellion against this foreign and fatuous fashion—this tropical and extremely trying tyranny. It would be absurd indeed to pretend that any one who pays income-tax has ever yet ventured to profess openly "I do without a bath": the boldest Englishman would rather die than lose caste by such an avowal. But we have known many men, and undergraduates (which is more) of the University of Oxford, who on really cold mornings in January have not hesitated to throw respectability, for the time being, to the winds.

You wake perhaps with a sore throat or a headache. You have not slept well, nor has the thought of what you must pass through in the morning contributed to your repose. It is a chapel morning with you, and there is no time to lose. Your gentleman has called you and officiously filled your bath. You have opened

your eyes for the last time: decidedly you must rouse yourself. Is there no appeal? You feel the water with your toe-tips, and say to yourself: "This is 2° below zero." If you have hot water (confirmed bathers usually have not), you slowly let a few drops trickle on the enamel, and test the temperature anew. Now, perhaps, you say "Fahrenheit, 39" or "Centigrade, &c.," which is the same thing. A little more hot water (this is to trespass on the shaving allowance; but no matter)—and your bath is at, say, 45°. Your towels are ready on the horse—near the bath, and so arranged that there may be as little interval as possible between purgatory and paradise; your sponge has reluctantly taken the fatal dive, and is sinking fast. Now comes the struggle between prudence and propriety—between the man and the idea. Are you a craven or a hero? A craven? Let us place you between the two. You hastily throw your towels down with studied negligence, and springle them with water. If you have a mat or strip of flannel to stand on, you tread it well down and crumple it: if you are particularly realistic, you pour a very little water from your basin (having previously washed) into your bath. Vain deceit! Useless compromise! Unprofitable fraud! Your scout will not be cajoled—never mind! The craven in you which you fondly call conscience is becalmed. Conventionality is outraged, but she will not tell her shame.

No! rather be a man: be bold. You *know* baths are a mere superstition. What good did they ever do to anybody? Physicians talk of the "glow" they impart to the human body. What do they mean? If we went naked like the Greeks, it might be worth one's while to glisten. If they mean the warmth of reaction, it is just as good to stand on the floor in one's nightgown for two minutes, and then get into bed again. As for cleanliness—it is the worst mistake of all to imagine baths clean you. We know some people do no other washing. They are dirty people. Be clean, and do it in a pleasant way.

Already the frosts have begun : it will soon be mid-winter. Now is the time (while our first rheum of slow recovery is with us, and every whispered sibilant tortures the tender trachea) for a resolute and wholesale *σεισάχθεια*. If we must have baths, let us at least have hot baths. Next winter it may be too late. The practice will have become all but universal : cold water bathing will then have spread to the homes of the poor and the watering-places of the continent—*Quod dī avortant !*

An association has been formed with the object of discouraging the practice complained of. The *Antipsychrobaptists* meet once a fortnight and hear papers read upon the subject. Membership involves no obligations beyond total abstinence from the cold bath. There is no subscription ; fines exacted for the infringement of the society's only rule being at present frequent enough to defray current expenses. The surplus, and voluntary contributions, which well-affected persons are invited to make through the treasurer, will be devoted to the execution of a scheme for building public *Thermae*. Such are the active means at present adopted in Oxford for the uprooting of a new-fangled and unreasonable creed which has already made alarming progress, and threatens, if the tide is not stemmed at once, to deluge every people in Christendom.

Βάψ.



THE NIGHT MAIL.

NIGHT falls as thick as snow. Below, the rails—
Two Sundered destinies to meet no more—
Lie cold and lustrous. Overhead, the black
Brick arch o'ershadows heavily their track,
Making a little islet-space of Hell :
The buzzing idiot wires
Mutter an unintelligible song ;
The light wind gasps, and stirs again, and fails
Like one that labours half-conceived desires.
Down the line, far along,
The searching scream and menace of a train
Can scarce outrun the brute they harbinger :
Stealthy and swift,
Made mad with power and speed, she comes ; her throat
Flames red reflexion on the sinuous steam
That floats along her back :
Trampling the narrow bounds that prison her—
A loose-limbed serpent reeling thro' the night,
She roars past : making follow at her tail
Paper and leaves that slept upon the track—
Follow in wild ungovernable drift—
Slips out of sight,
Freighted with human souls. And soon her scream
Wails faint and far : and all is still again,
Only the idiot wires keep up their hum,
And the wind strives to stir,
Moaning like patient souls in martyrdom.

NOTES.

TWO important examinations have taken place since our last issue; and undoubtedly the right man was chosen in either case. There were fewer candidates than usual for the VACANCIES. vacant fellowship at All Souls; but what may be described as the All-Sold lecturership in Greek History at Christ Church drew a large number of competitors, who are said to be all equally surprised and indignant at the result.

MR. FROUDE's inaugural address was remarkable for nothing but the bad taste of PROFESSOR FROUDE. an ostentatious repudiation of all that was dearest to his predecessor, and a perfectly inadequate apology for holding the Chair of Modern History. "I was tempted," said Mr. Froude, "and I fell." Touching enough. *Pone me, Sa-lisbury!* Which is by interpretation, either: "Give me a place, my lord, though I be old," (one can always sneer at Gladstone), "though it is a rank political job; though being an historian I find myself tempted to tell what is not true; though every reasoning soul in Oxford cries out against the appointment. Give me the place, the place." Or else it may be taken more simply as "Get thee behind me *Sa*—"—by direct implication from the words of the Professor. Only *that* he did not say.—It is not everyone who can be ungrateful by innuendo so deftly as Mr. Froude.

MR. GLADSTONE. NOTHING could have looked cooler than Mr. Gladstone's scarlet-clad figure in the Sheldonian, as he bowed to right and left with exquisite courtesy among the perspiring Dons and Dominae. For us in the gallery his utterance had the vagueness of sweet music: the voice was paramount at all times, but the heavy falls of fainting men and the tramp of carriers-out continually drowned the words. Official providence had prepared for

a large bag, and was not disappointed. The mortality during the first half-hour was very severe. Jesus alone (if there be any trust in rumour) lost thirteen killed and wounded, and other Colleges fared proportionately ill. It had been arranged that the iron gates upon the Broad should be *porta libitina*; but the gates were narrow, and the number of carriers quite insufficient to meet the demands upon their services. Straw was laid down out of kind thought for the many lying sick within the Sheldonian.

Quantities of superfluous women and strangers choked the lower gallery; a thick *κνίσση* of stuffy humanity choked the occupants of the upper. All had been done upon the model of Jehu's proceedings as narrated in the Tenth Chapter of the Second Book of Kings—a doubtful precedent.

EPIGRAMS on the *Isis* continue to come in. This week's crop is rather below than above the average. This is perhaps the best:

	THE <i>Isis</i> delicately goes
THE	Through rich effluvial plains;
ISIS	Young Oxford here projects its prose—
	Old Oxford pours its drains.

OURSELVES. In our last number we inserted a letter from "Catspaw" running us down. Of course it looked like a piece of cheap magnanimity; but a little opposition is just what we wanted. The charge of priggishness is no doubt unanswerable. But personal attacks we never encouraged. Someone who *has* read the *Spirit Lamp* has perhaps been hoaxing "Catspaw."



CAUSERIES DU VENDREDI.

No. VII.—The Poet Laureate.

IF the Government find that in filling the vacant place at Court lately occupied by Tennyson, they have a difficult problem to solve, it will not be for want of volunteer assistance. The columns of the press have teemed with proposals and suggestions, some of them provided by popular candidates for the post. And there is scarce an Editor who has not “done a round” with the glass slipper, doubtfully adjusting it to sundry hoofs.

But all these volunteers seem to have cramped the flight of their misgivings by clinging too faithfully to one or both of two common assumptions, to wit:—

(1) The office of Poet Laureate ought to be abolished.

(2) If the office be retained, a real poet ought to perform it.

On these assumptions let us turn the rays of the *Spirit Lamp*.

The most distinguished name to be found associated with the former assumption is that of William Morris. He is, as a republican, especially sensible of the anachronistic character of the institution, and its incongruity with enlightened democratic ideals to which he points as the fatal feature. But this objection is not peculiar to republicans. It is but an effect and a symptom of the growing disgust for the decorated herd of which the Poet Laureate is but one: for the institution of which his office is but a part: for courts and courtiers in all their works and ways.

But it does not follow that for those who feel this disgust, the dictates of their impatience will prove to be the best guide, or that the quickest or most thorough way to exterminate the plant is to pounce on such of its flowers as most readily catch the public eye. Yet it is highly characteristic of ourselves and of our times that we should fall upon these giddy courses. We have a cherished habit in this country of nibbling at the leaves, pecking at the flowers and grumbling at the fruit of a

suspected or doomed institution, while suffering or ignoring the roots, or even piously protecting them against the profane touch of less muddle-headed reformers.

These things we daily do. On Sunday we pray in the Litany against heresy and schism. Or we are shocked to read (perhaps in connection with Grindewald confabulations) that there are still a few people who do not consider heresy and schism harmless or salutary. On Tuesday we write indignant letters (of course to the *Daily News*) to denounce the bigotry and intolerance of those few. It is not surprising if by Wednesday we have engendered a mental atmosphere as favourable to all manner of confusion and even to hypocrisy in ourselves as it is unfavourable to the appreciation of sincerity and consistency in others. So we deal also with the British Sabbath, Drunkenness and the Monarchy tinkering at conclusions and consequences while we shirk premisses and shut our eyes to antecedents. Of these practices we are, naturally, proud: boasting ourselves of our Practical Instinct, our Whole-some Distrust of Abstract Methods and our Wise Dislike of General Principle. To which virtuous wisdom among other gifts and graces we confidently attribute our prosperity in this world and our excellent prospects in the next. Wherein we seem to resemble the medical wise-acres of old time who killed or cured the fever-struck with red rags and were ever for tickling and tinkering at symptoms rather than for eradicating disease. But a certain diffidence has hindered us from hastily assuming for ourselves the honourable title of quack which was long ago, as well by acclamation as by authority, conferred upon them.

It is the recurrent action of these habits that is discernible in the desire to abolish the hack Bard of the Court. The slightly odious flavour of the idea of Poet Laureate which prompts public distaste is but the same flavour of venality, humbug and flunkeyism which characterises the Court at large; a flavour too

apt to pass unnoticed upon the popular palate, or even to be relished, apart from its conspicuous and incongruous association with the semi-sacred Muses. But this is not so much a good reason for incontinently lopping off the repugnant blossom as for preserving it whole, that the true character of the plant may peradventure achieve due notice and come to be better understood.

This is why we should also support, instead of assailing, all manner of Royal Grants while the monarchy survives. And if Radicals and Republicans will consider these things they will not cry so loud for the extermination of the Laureate.

To the semi-Liberal and demi-semi-Liberal soul a further word in season: There is ever in you a contemptible desire to have it both ways; to maintain some rotten system or abuse, and at the same time to wriggle out of the more obvious or irksome (but not out of the more insidious and mischievous) of its natural and proper consequences. You are but indulging this propensity now.

Therefore let semi-Liberals also reflect that as long as the roots are left in the ground the more we see of the flowers and fruit the better.

Thus shall we all be left free to afford compliance to those who mourn the prospective loss of a picturesque archaism. Of such are Edmund Gosse and others. "True it is," (say these) "that the thing is an anachronism. But how few there be remaining of such anachronisms, and how pretty a one is this! To us, æsthetic Conservatives, Archæologists, Antiquaries, such things are among our chief delights."

The Radical may freely answer them—"Keep your picturesque archaism. It will serve more purposes than are dreamed of in your philosophy."

So let concord be achieved all round, and be it agreed that the Poet Laureate continue to flourish with all pomp and circumstance as an integral part of the Court.

On this peaceful footing we may approach thesecond assumption: that if the office of Poet Laureate be maintained, a real poet ought to perform it.

Let us consider how heavy a price this were to pay, and how ill we can afford it.

(1) To impose this office on a poet is almost certainly, more or less, to sacrifice him. The freedom of his speech must be abridged; and therewith, in due process, the freedom of his thought. This means the atrophy, in some measure, of his mind; and the cramping and corruption of his muse. These consequences must tend to grow more and more certain and effective in times like ours, when new lights keep breaking in on the higher minds, and when the divergence keeps growing wider between the conventionally-respectable and the true. Such an office tends to make or keep its functionary orthodox in mind; not necessarily orthodox in respect of his particular conclusions, but rather of the courses and processes of his thought, obeying an illicit bias. Such seems generally to be the meaning intended in speaking of Orthodoxy: a word justly taken to indicate the habit of sticking in the mud; and no longer as specifying the particular kind of mud stuck in. Now an Orthodox Poet is a thing imagination boggles at; you turn for relief to the contemplation of the Orthodox Shopkeeper which outrages no congruities and suggests no contradictions.

If the example of Tennyson himself be pointed to, as soothing such fears and deprecating the suggestion of such risks, we may allow that in all probability he remained undefiled by the pitch he touched, and that nothing was lost to mankind in him by reason of the livery he wore. But even in him we can never be sure of this. And in the future, for reasons already hinted at, the case must generally be rather Swinburne's than Tennyson's. Swinburne's is indeed a strong example to answer those who appeal to Tennyson's. Had Swinburne stood in the Laureate's shoes these twenty years his tones had shewn another ring and the

waste had been great. Where would *Poems and Ballads* have been? *Songs before Sunrise* had, for the most part, gone unsung; nor would the Roman Catholic Church have been delighted at being addressed as "Grey Spouse of Satan."

To clash at all with the Smug Idea in any of its religious, social, or political expressions is not for the Laureate. He may not bite the hand that feeds him, nor make war upon his eventual paymaster, the British Public, as represented in its typical and now long time dominant section the *Bourgeois* Middle Classes. And as we advance by every decade it becomes less and less likely that the limits of archaic or provincial decorum will coincide with the natural boundaries of the poet's genius, even if so exceptional a coincidence were achieved in Tennyson's case. The Court and the Parlour, like the Church, have their creeds and articles; the Courtier and the Official like the ecclesiastic must put expediency and conformity first and truth second. Let no Poet then be prisoned in the gilded cage; nor have we poets to spare for any such purpose. A wingless bird will serve as well and no sin be done.

(2) The wingless bird will not only serve as well but much better. The idea of the Poet Laureate is a vicious idea. It embodies, encourages and supports a vulgar and base estimate of the things of the mind; an estimate reflected in Sir Edwin Arnold's Philistine suggestion that the Muses or the Arts or the public that should draw spiritual sustenance therefrom have something to gain or to hope from Court patronage, or State endowments: as if there were anything but corruption to be bred of their association with any vulgarities or respectabilities whatsoever. And whether the Laureate be a worshipper or (as, at the least, he must be) only a respecter of Mrs. Grundy, yet must he tend, by his circumspect regards, to foster and to maintain in the sight of the public the Smug Idea. The force and weight of his example is much abated if he be no Poet; but must wax mischievously cogent if he be one.

Moreover, the idea of the Laureate is apt to impose itself in a false light upon our dull perceptions if the Laureate be a poet. The obvious concrete ever diverts and bewilders the eye of the multitude; and the Poet's genius sheds its own rays upon his office and disguises with 'a reflected plausibility the intrinsic paltriness of the idea, inverting it with a virtue not its own, and giving currency to grossly Philistine conceptions. You could not put a poet's genius to a worse use. It would be no bad thing if official verse were to sink to the level of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* for a while: that such spurious glory may have time to fade as Tennyson's noble Muse has long shed on the institution. It would be lamentable that this incidental disservice should be done by making Laureates of three poets successively: and thus a further evil be added to the sacrifice of the poet himself.

So far, then, it seems (1) that the office should be preserved and (2) that he should not be a poet who performs it. But lest these considerations should seem to mark out Lewis Morris, or some such other, as the man for the occasion, it is needful to add that neither ought the Laureate even to seem, in the eyes of the multitude, to be a poet. Else we confirm them in strong delusion: another ill use for the Laureate, who plainly might be clear of all suspicion of poetry, a very Cæsar's wife among verse-mongers.

If these warnings be duly laid to heart we shall escape blunders and make a safe choice, to effect which should content the ambitious critic; nor need he presume to press his counsel to the point of making final choice. Yet it may be permissible to suggest that all snares would be escaped, all ills avoided and a further useful purpose served, if the office of Poet Laureate were joined to a seat in the Cabinet and offered so, since a new Chancellor of the Exchequer seems to be desired, to Sir William Harcourt.

THOMAS BADEN POWELL.

New College.

TRIOLETS.

I REALLY can't go into Hall,
 You don't do badly at the Queen's !
 That fresher's was the dullest call—
 I really can't go into Hall.
 This cutlet isn't bad at all,
 But *do* look sharp about the beans.
 I really can't go into Hall.
 You don't do badly at the Queen's !

What ever made you trump my king ?
 You *must* have known I had the ace.
 Your mind is simply wandering !
 What ever made you trump my king ?
 It seems a very simple thing—
 Here's " Cavendish " : now, find the place !
 What ever made you trump my king ?
 You *must* have known I had the ace !

CYGNET.

LOVE AND BEAUTY.

(FROM GREEK ANTHOLOGY.—STRATON.)

AIR is the path wherein we twain are met ;
 But since 'tis wingèd Love our footstep guides,
 Say now, shall we endure and not forget ?
 Beauty in thee, and Love in me abides ;
 Both are in season ; both a moment stay
 If they unite ; but both will fly away
 If one guards not the other from decay.

ON THE INSTABILITY OF HUMAN AFFECTION.

SOME people love never :
I'd rather be clever
Than rich or unpleasant or dirty ;
however,
Some people love never.


Some people love once :
Manito's a dunce ;
He sits in his office and curses and grunts—
Some people love once.

Some people love twice ;
The " Florence " is nice ;
They give you the choice between pudding
and ice—
Some people love twice.

The young poet climbs
The rungs of his crimes—
I love an indefinite number of times.
I write little rhymes.

CALIBAN.

"THE DEATH OF CENONE; AND OTHER POEMS."

E cannot criticise these poems. They are the last "twigs from an old tree"—a tree that has given us rich blossoms and mellow fruit. We note here and there familiar touches as "The dream wailed in her when she woke beneath the stars," and "The Silent Voices" carries us back to "Crossing the Bar," "Tears, Idle Tears" and a long chain of lyrics with a note peculiarly and exquisitely their own. If some of the twigs are dry and leafless, or—to drop metaphor—if some of the poems are in a tone of melancholy darker than Keats would allow, of a sort of irritable despair with which we have grown familiar in recent years we can forgive because we can understand. And indeed, to be just, this last volume has less of such an accent than some previous one—courage and hope have come back to the brave man's heart as the roar of Death's bar fell more distinctly on his ear.

We can understand such an accent because it is the troubled tone of one who feels he has lived into an age which he cannot understand—has lived to see things develop not as he vaguely hoped but altogether otherwise, and that beliefs, and customs, and institutions dear to him as life—indeed one to him with life—are being swept away. "The last of the Romans" is no more—the last great man to whom England as it is known in history was the ideal country of freedom and order. The feudal life of England has found many lovers and poets. Of these the greatest are Shakespeare and Scott—but they are the greatest because in their picture of this life there is so much more, so many of the fundamentals of human life to which all particular institutions are indifferent. It is only in the external pageantry and panorama that they are feudal and aristocratic. But in Chaucer and still more in Tennyson this pageantry is the great essential. Tennyson is the greatest master of word painting—rich in colour and exquisite in detail—in our language, and this power has worked in the service of a clear and definite ideal,

to portray an institution and a life in which that ideal has been slowly and in full concreteness realised in the course of centuries.

It is not a life into which love of the mere free play of intelligence enters largely—as it enters into the life of Athens or of Paris—and in consequence his philosophy has all the inadequacy we know and need not dwell on. But it is a picturesque life and one of deep-rooted instincts and convictions, and all these Tennyson has woven into the richly coloured web of his work—which is as it were a Bayeux tapestry of the last phase of English life. For the groundwork we have a minute and truthful limning of English scenery, for the lower scenes the still, traditional life of the English village, of Squire and Parson and Labourer, and for its outer border a vaguer picture of an ideal nobility and king.

How close is Tennyson's painting of nature need not be dwelt on, for it has become a common-place: but we should never fail to note that it is not drawn for its own sake or simply—as with Keats—to delight the poet's own heart, but as a setting for the life he is depicting. It is the English village,

The climbing street, the mill, the leafy lanes,
The pea-cock, yew-tree and lonely Hall.

To the heart of Enoch Arden a tropical isle is "beauteous hateful." He has given us the Squire's Hall with its "broad lawns" and the English meadows "dewy fresh, broused by deep-uddered kine."

All this, with a detail, we would delight to dwell on, is only the setting for the life of English villages. Unfortunately, to give a picture of that life, except in its externals and occasional, simple, often-recurring phases of feeling, he had not the dramatic genius. Where has he portrayed the life of English villagers with the veracity and humour and insight that Scott has shown in his pictures of Scottish peasant life? Can Tennyson's ideal king be compared for vital and dramatic force with Thackeray's ideal gentleman, Harry Esmond? But we need not quarrel with what we have not got,

but delight in what we have. The external picture of this life he has given us is perfect. We can group together individual examples of the different types, and always we can at least see the outer man. Among the squires we have "Sir Aylmer Aylmer, that almighty man," Sir Walter Vivian, "a great broad-shouldered genial Englishman,"—and similarly vivid types of parsons and farmers. English maidens are scattered through his works. The same want of dramatic ability and the want also of epic movement and force deprived us of a clear full presentation of all that was ideally great in his well-bred English character. Arthur and his knights are shadows, and their wars and jousts and lovmakings are a series of "Tableaux Vivants." Compared with Scott's

Though charging knights like whirlwinds go
And bill-men ply the ghastly blow ;

or the rush of Byron's "Siege of Corinth,"—what a waxwork charge is this—

They couched their spears and pricked their steeds and thus
Their plumes driven backward by the wind they made
In moving, all together down upon him
Bare, as a wild wave in the wide North Sea
Green-glimmering toward the summit bears, with all
Its stormy crests that smoke against the skies,
Down on a bark and overbears the bark.

And yet how picturesque it is. This is Tennyson's undying claim to immortality, his power as a word-painter and his appeal through it to the associations and profoundest feelings of the English heart. The last peaceful phase of feudalism has passed before our eyes in a haze of colour—as some dying fish pass in their last moments through every splendour of hue.

Therefore it is well that he should be in Westminster Abbey, beneath its arches and stained windows where the organ peals. There we could not have laid Keats—he would not have felt the daisies growing over him. No cold stone abbey would have been a fit resting

place for Shelley's passion-fretted "tenement of clay." The sea and the fire reclaimed his spirit akin as it was to the inorganic, elemental forces of nature. Byron should have rested at Missolonghi, where

He shook the yoke of inauspicious stars
From his world-wearied flesh.

For Wordsworth, the dales and grassy hills of Cumberland; for Scott, the Tweed and the Eildon Hills; but for Tennyson, the Abbey.

And with him let the laureateship die. He is the last singer of settled institutions and fixed national ideals. Why should we keep the trappings of feudalism for poets who can only preserve its lackeyism. When the present storm and darkness is over-past and a life of institutions and faiths is possible again, we shall find a fitting laureate, or all poets will be laureates.

HOC SECURIOR.



THE BLACK BROUGHAM.

A PLAY WITHOUT WORDS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

FELIX DARFORD.

CYRIL BURGE (*in love with* CORINNA DARFORD).

REGINALD BECKET (*in love with* CORINNA DARFORD;
disguised as a Coachman).

CORINNA DARFORD.

ACT I.—THE CRIME.

A STREET in Mayfair. A dense yellow fog completely fills the stage and it is at first impossible to distinguish more than the vague outlines of a horse and brougham, drawn up in front of a grey house. Little by little however the mist lifts and REGINALD BECKET is discovered on the box of the carriage. Next, a faint light is thrown on the faces of FELIX and CORINNA DARFORD, who are seated inside, conversing earnestly in inaudible tones. Behind, on the bar, crouches CYRIL BURGE muffled in a black opera-cloak. He holds a gag and a cord in his right hand.

Suddenly, CORINNA DARFORD opens the brougham-door farthest from the footlights, runs up the steps of the house and lets herself in with a latch-key.

CYRIL BURGE gets up from the bar, inserts both hands through the back-window of the carriage—a wider one than usual and having no glass—and appears to be throttling someone within. A stifled groan is heard. The light is now concentrated on REGINALD BECKET who rises from his seat, startled by the sound, and kneeling down peers intently into the carriage through the window. He is on the point of getting down from the box, but after listening a moment seems reassured and keeps his seat. In the meantime CYRIL BURGE moves stealthily round, unperceived by REGINALD BECKET, to the door of the brougham nearest to the stage, steps in, draws the blinds and is heard arranging something within.

A policeman passes and throws the light of his lantern on the carriage. He resumes his beat. CORINNA

DARFORD now opens the door of the grey house which she closes quietly behind her and totters slowly down the steps white and shivering—a small parcel in her hand. She gets into the brougham, gives one stifled scream, leans out of the window and waves her hand in the direction of the wings.

The brougham is driven slowly off by REGINALD BECKET as the curtain falls.

ACT II.—A CONDEMNED CELL.

REGINALD BECKET sits alone at a table looking at a small miniature of CORINNA DARFORD. He appears deeply moved, and kisses the picture passionately several times. A thought full of agony strikes him, and he rises to look at the clock on the other side of the stage. As he walks slowly towards it his face grows stern: shame and self-sacrifice seem to be fighting for the mastery. He gropes wildly for his handkerchief to wipe the sweat from his brow, but fails to find it.

As he goes back to his seat, after glancing at the clock, his eye falls on a letter lying on the carpet. It is open—addressed to CORINNA DARFORD. He kisses it sadly, and is about to put it by without reading it when he appears to *recognize the handwriting*. He turns the envelope over and over several times in his fingers and at last draws out the folded sheet and reads it. As he does so an awful change passes over his face. Despair and hate are written there. At the last line a strong light is thrown upon the letter from the wings—"I will be *there*, Corinna,—Cyril Burge," are the words.

REGINALD BECKET tears the miniature from his breast, spits on it and crushes it to a shapeless mass under his heel.

At this moment a hesitating knock is heard, and CORINNA enters

The clock slowly strikes and continues striking as the curtain falls. (*Curtain.*)



The Spirit Lamp.

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CERTATIO INDIGNORUM.

THOUGH, when the great man dies, his fame
Descends not to the greedy crew,
He leaves behind him all the same,
His shoe.

Soon as they learn 'tis his to die
They swarm around and eager sit
On couch or chair or stool to try
The fit.

And then in *Telegraph* or *Times*
The graceless diagram is printed
And each man's right in his own rimes
Is hinted.

So Cinderella's sister tried
The slipper dropt in midnight flight,
But nor left foot could make one bride
Nor right.

Oh Lewis, Edwin, Alfred, why
Here on his grave make such a pother?
The shoe is claim'd, bethink you, by
Another.

"NOCTE CALENTE."

(A REMINISCENCE.)

MY dreams that night were terrible! All the faces I had ever seen were gathered round my bed in the wildest confusion. The room was full of voices talking, laughing, and crying. Trampling of feet, clapping of hands, and cheering of crowds surged round me in a whirlwind of overwhelming sound, while the solemn music of an oratorio chanted by millions of voices rose and fell above the tumult. I seemed to have been lying for centuries helpless, voiceless, motionless. The noises grew louder and louder every moment;—louder and louder—till suddenly they culminated in one united scream, so shrill and tense and terrible that the spell was broken, and in my dream . . . I died.

* * * * *

Black night! I could hear the rain splashing against the glass, and the long sob of the breaking waves. The wind was blowing in short sharp gusts, and in the intervals I caught the sound of hoarse voices talking under my window.

Suddenly I became conscious that my eyes were still shut, but the impression left by my ghastly dream was so vivid that I shuddered and kept them closed. Next moment there came a rush of feet up the wooden stair and loud knocking at my door.

"Come out, sir! Quick! sir, quick!"

I sprang out of bed.

"Great heavens!" The air was thick with a dull red glow which throbbed in the polished oak on the walls and flickered into crimson sparks in the rain-drops on the panes. "What is it?" I shouted; but there was no answer. Only the voices below the window rose in louder and more agitated tones, and the light grew fiercer than before. I hurried on my clothes, dashed open the door, ran round to the back of the house which faced the sea and—stood spell-bound;

for, as I turned the corner, hell seemed to open at my feet.

Far out in the bay lay a burning ship. Earth and sky were alight with the splendour of her writhing fires, but to my excited imagination she seemed to quiver and shrink like a tortured soul. The jagged rocks on the shore stood out black against the glare—colossal coals to fall and feed the seas of flame.

Tiny demon-boats were lying still upon the water or darting with fiendish glee before the fast-rising wind. Every minute the gusts became fiercer and more frequent. Tufts of flame broke from the heaving mass and were whirled away into the night. The smoke rolled in dusky eddies, red-hot above the burning ship, but cooling into blackness as they swept before the gale. A glorious, fearful sight!

On the sands, three hundred feet below the place where I was standing, a crowd of dark figures were huddled together at the water's edge. A small knot of men stood near me, and as the wind lulled, I heard one of them say, "She can't hold much longer, . . . lucky" A fierce gust drowned the rest. Then again the same voice—"Thirty-five"

"All saved?" asked another.

The reply was half lost, but I caught the words, "One couldn't left behind."

The sound of a distant cheer came up from the crowd below, as a small boat shot out from the shore. For a moment it seemed to stagger and disappear in the red breakers; then as it rose on the waves beyond, another faint cheer came up almost like a wail on the wind.

"She'll never do it," said a voice behind me, and as if in answer to his words, a still fiercer gust rushed past us with the howl of a living thing. The horror of an awful fascination made me turn again to look at the burning ship. . . .

A glare of blinding light! a mighty shaft of con-

quering flame! and with a long hissing, rending roar
. . . . the Gates of Hell were shut.

* * * * *

Out of the night rises a wild cry, a shriek of unutterable despair.

“Dead! Dead! Dead!”

. . . . And the wind sank.

Z.



AN UNDERGRADUATE ON OXFORD DONS.

MANY people have at many times speculated about what is interesting, and all men take pleasure in what is interesting, either narrowly to themselves, or broadly to the world, or more broadly to themselves and the world. But few have cared to talk or think about the uninteresting, and yet the subject (though it sounds paradoxical to say it) teems with interest.

A person or a thing comes before our notice and fails to excite our interest. We put it away from us. We say, "I don't want to know anything about it; it doesn't interest me." *Then* the thing becomes intensely interesting. Then it becomes a pleasure to examine it, and to find why it is uninteresting. Take an example, say you are walking in the street, a voice behind you calls out, "hi!" you look round and see a dull, middle-aged man with whiskers; he is excited, he is calling to somebody; in another moment you observe that the person he is calling to is another middle-aged man, equally dull, but without whiskers; then you hear what he is saying, and you find he is telling the other man that he has left his goloshes in the hall. How uninteresting, you think, how tedious. You have been disappointed three times over: first, when you heard a voice behind you shouting in the street, and your heart leapt, and you looked round and found the shouter was dull; secondly, when you found that the man he was shouting at was not you but somebody else who was as dull as the shouter; thirdly, when the dull man said a dull thing to his dull friend.

So the whole episode is flat and uninteresting, and you think no more about it, after the vague feeling of resentment against the two men has worn out. But if you do think about it again you will find it has become interesting through its very dulness; it makes you think of what might have happened, how you might have heard a voice in the street behind you, and have looked round and seen a wonderful thing, a terrible tragedy, or

a beautiful face, and yet you only saw these two creatures talking about their goloshes; the most uninteresting thing that could have happened has happened; but even as you think that, you exalt it to the dignity of a superlative. De Quincey, in his *Murder considered as one of the fine arts*, while claiming for murder degrees of perfection or imperfection, quotes the instance of an eminent physician who spoke of an ulcer as a "beautiful ulcer"; meaning, of course, not that the ulcer was really a thing of beauty in itself, but that it was a perfect example of its kind, a perfection of corruption. In the same way, an uninteresting thing may become supremely interesting on account of its perfection of dullness.

Whether or not I have established a case or made my meaning clear, I have at least brought forward an excuse for my subject.

To begin a paper about Oxford Dons by saying that they were supremely uninteresting would be suicidal. But now that I have explained my views on the subject of uninteresting things, there can no longer be any reason for withholding the opinion that Oxford Dons as a class are utterly and perfectly uninteresting. It is hardly necessary to say that by Oxford Dons are meant Oxford Dons *quâ* Dons and considered only as Dons; to say that all Oxford Dons were uninteresting men would be as impertinent as it would be ridiculous. No, it is only as Dons that I am considering them, and I maintain that, considered as Dons, they are ridiculous, dull, uninteresting and unnecessary. Many of them know it and feel it very much, but there are some who don't realize it, who think they are important and striking, and some even think they are an essential part of the University; indeed at one time it was a common saying among Dons that Oxford would be a very nice place if it were not for the Undergraduates; whereas the true state of the case is this:—that Oxford is a very nice place if one ignores the Dons, and if one could only get oneself to believe that they don't exist at all one

would be perfectly happy. The truth is, that Dons occupy in the University the same position as moral laws occupy in the Universe; this is why they are so tedious. However, my main object is to show that Dons are uninteresting, and to do this properly I must show that they are dull. Now the first step must be to classify them; for anything that is classified has a tendency to become dull. Dons then may be roughly divided into Deans, Lecturers, 'Heads of Colleges and Proctors. The Deans represent discipline within the College gates. The Lecturers are self-evidently and by their very name confessed to be intolerable. The Heads of Colleges are merely exaggerated Deans, and the Proctors are a curious mixture of Deans, Duns, Duty and Detectives.

The Dean of course is not necessarily a clergyman or even a Christian; the name has absolutely no meaning; it is only one among many of the ridiculous pretensions of Oxford Dons. A Dean passes his life in saying things he doesn't mean, and which neither he nor anyone else believes. Men in his College look upon him much as people in the world look upon a rainy day or a dissenting minister; something which is always disagreeable and uninteresting, but which occasionally forces itself upon one's notice. It is a tragic thing in connexion with Deans to think that whatever they do, they are certain to be disliked and abused for it, and that whatever they want in the College, they fail to get. Under the head of Deans also come vice-presidents, who are, however, quite unimportant.

Lecturers are those who prevent men from getting good classes in the Schools; some of them take a great amount of trouble in doing this.

Heads of Colleges do nothing if they can help it; many of them are gentlemen by birth.

Proctors are like Deans on a larger scale, only they are hardly ever to be met with; they have to go out in the streets on rainy nights, and their lives are generally very miserable.

Having now classified Dons, it is my duty to show that they are quite uninteresting. To do this, it is first necessary to arrive at some conclusion about what is interesting. I shall therefore give it as my opinion that an interesting person is one who interests people who have no direct reason for being interested in him. I mean, that because a man interests his parents who brought him into the world, or his washerwoman to whom he owes money, he is not on that account an interesting person; no, he must compel interest in those outside his own immediate circle. Now in Oxford, who is there outside the immediate circle of the Dons who might take an interest in them? obviously, no one, except the undergraduates and the visitors to the University. The undergraduates take no interest in them, because it is impossible for them to take interest in those who are perpetually in their way, whether they wish to cultivate their intellects by reading in their own way, or express their joy in life by making a noise or doing some other equally irrational and delightful thing.

Is it possible for a young man to be interested in an older man who insists that he must attend a lecture on Mill, when he wants to read Marlowe? Or is it possible for a boy to be interested in a man who says it is a scandalous thing that he should make a noise, or light a bonfire in the "quad.?" The undergraduates, then, take no interest in the Dons. There remain the visitors, who naturally, coming to a place full of beautiful things and charming young men, can take no interest in such a thing as a Don, who represents to them the gloomy and dull part of Oxford life. What do visitors look at when they come into a college? The beautiful buildings first, of course; the grass that has been mown and cut for four hundred years; the chapel tower with its fantastic gargoyles, its carved stones, and happy accident of a perfect background; they look inside the chapel at the window with its crimson, blue and purple, the eternal witnesses of a lost art, and they go out again

into the summer air and look—for what? not for an ugly bearded Don with a black gown and an important air, no, but for a merry boy with a fresh face under his straw hat and a flower in his coat.

Perhaps, after all, the real reason why Dons are so uninteresting, is that they stand out against a background of such intense interest and beauty that they appear darker and duller than they really are. However that may be, they remain the one dull thing in Oxford, the one commonplace in the romance of an exquisite life, the one harsh discord in the harmony of a perfect music. Let us forgive them, but forget that they exist.

ALFRED DOUGLAS.



TEA.

A POINTLESS DIALOGUE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD FALTER (*a silly person*).MR. BROWN (*a silly person*).MR. COLCERT (*a silly person*).

SCENE—The rooms of an undergraduate, barbarically furnished.

FALTER. Sugar? Well, yes, sugar. Do you take sugar?

BROWN. Yes; I take sugar.

FALTER. Milk? Well, yes, milk. Do you take milk?

BROWN. Yes; I take milk. (*A pause.*) Sometimes.

Enter COLCERT.

BROWN. 'Afternoon. . . . (*offering tea.*) Tea?

COLCERT. No; no tea, thanks. Did you see *Maude*?

BROWN. You don't mean to say the O.U.D.S. are doing something of Tennyson's?

FALTER. Ha! ha!

COLCERT. No. *La Millette*.

BROWN. Oh! Unspeakable, overpowering!

FALTER. *Surtout point de jupe.*

BROWN. Ha! ha! (*Another pause. They drink tea.*)

COLCERT. Are you speaking at the Union, Falter?

FALTER. Yes; third.

BROWN. I hope you'll have a good house.

FALTER. Behind me?

BROWN. Dear me, no! what I mean is, I hope you will be listened to.

FALTER. I know nothing about the subject — “The future of woman,” but I have been reading back numbers of “*The Petticoat*.”

COLCERT. What’s that?

FALTER. Oh! a new magazine, run by women chiefly. The first number hasn’t come out yet.

BROWN. Then what do you mean by saying you have read back numbers?

FALTER. I don’t know.

(A pause.)

BROWN. Well Falter I hope you’ll be a success. Your paper on Wycherley the other day at the “*Simond*” was a treat.

COLCERT. A *great* treat.

BROWN. A Greats school-treat?

COLCERT. I couldn’t agree with you, but it wasn’t bad.

FALTER. Ah! I find it difficult to contradict *everybody*. Paradox is played out now, and the only really striking thing is to be a match-girl or a medium. But about cigarettes — are they really made of camels . . . ?

BROWN. Oh no, Falter. They are made by *the million* in Birmingham, and there are no camels there.

COLCERT. What *do* you mean Brown? There’s a needle manufactory there.

FALTER. I never heard of it.

BROWN. Ha! Ha! Haw! Haw! *(Offers cake.)*

FALTER. Cherry? Ah! I thought it would be cherry. *(Sighs.)* Cherry is as vulgar as champagne. I think you’re a bit vulgar, Brown. What do you think, Colcert?

COLCERT *(seriously)*. I . . . I’m afraid I’m no judge. *(Falter giggles consumedly; Brown tries to turn the conversation by dropping his cup.)*

FALTER. You seem an awful jackass, Brown. Did you hear Gladstone?

BROWN. No I can't say I did.

FALTER. Nobody wants you to say what you didn't.
I'm going to Moody's to-night.

BROWN. I'm not—I hate cant.

FALTER. How's that? I'm tired of people who only pretend to be sinners. I like saints. They make *Chartreuse*.

(Turns to Colcert.)

Colcert, old man, I'm going now. I want to be amused.

(Turns to Brown.)

Where do you get your tea, Brown? You might tell them to send me some. Good night.

BROWN. Good night! (*Exeunt Falter and Colcert.*)

COLCERT (going downstairs). What a bore the man is?

FALTER. You've no idea of economy, Colcert; what's the good of being rude when he can't hear you?

J. RICHARD STREATHAM.



THE SOUL'S YEARNING.

(From the Greek.)

THERE is a place where the love that was dead
Gets out of bed
And stands on its head ;
Where no one is fed
Upon restaurant-bread ;
Where the sea-breeze is blue and the Bible is read.
Only to find it ! Only to change my socks !
Only to wander away where the wild hippotatus roams !
Only to worship !—It is only a penny a box
In the everlasting homes.

CIGARETTE PAPERS. No. I.—Mr. Newritch.

IN early life his aristocratic friends used to say of him, "Ah! *you* know Newritch? A good sort. He parts his hair in the middle and wears white socks"; and there you felt the matter ended.

But since he has given up addressing an earl he once knew as "my lord," his best friends, his "*smart*" friends, have ceased to cut him and come again—and again to his dinners and his dances.

Newritch has to a certain extent become the fashion, and is to be seen watching polo with the world at Hurlingham, with the world and the half-world at the Private View, with the world again in the Royal Enclosure at Ascot, and at all the court balls. But the Park and Paris, where he will tell you modestly he got his cook (though you may be pretty certain the latter never got an *entrée* there), are his favourite haunts.

Any day in the season you may meet him frock-coated, gardenia'd and chaired—an air of "*leisure*" in his tie, which nobody but a first-rate tailor's assistant could hope to emulate and no amount of money could command. In a word from cylinder to spat, from boot to button-hole, he is irreproachable, irresistible.

And, mind you, his clothes have none of the obtruding glory of his grandfather's; his coat, it is true, is not old, but it just avoids the vice of being bran-new, and if he does perhaps look rather as if he had just come out of a bandbox, he does not convey the appearance of having been dusted after it.

Je m'efface (a device which he has placed upon his silver) admirably expresses the man.

The gaudy days of the open hospitalities, and still more open h's of his predecessors, have given way to two days' visits and perfect English.

Mr. Newritch's house is as orderly and as restful as his person: glitter is avoided, comfort studied; a dressing-room everywhere, and electric light turned on by a button as you enter your bedroom.

Newritch himself sees after his guests, and falls into a pretty temper (nothing violent of course) if he finds the servant has omitted to put out two soaps (one unscented, one scented) to your soap dish.

There is a neat card (with *Je m'efface*) over your mantel-shelf, containing at the top the hours of meals and family prayers.

In fact when you are on your first visit to Newritch's and before you begin to know him properly, you feel in clover in your very bedroom; there is a bright fire blazing in the grate, a sofa that is really comfortable, and above all a decent writing table (with plenty of envelopes and blotting paper), at which it is possible to write without being frozen.

Alas! Dinner disillusionizes you.

Not that Newritch's dinners are indifferent—far from it. He himself is of course the last to draw your attention to its *general* perfection, but then he has cultivated self-depreciation with such diligence, and conceals it so successfully, that until you are educated to his ways you will never discover, for example, that the best peaches to be had at Heep House (the name of Newritch's castle) are those which your host skins roughly, almost cruelly, and that the best entrées are those of which he helps himself to a tea-spoonful and leaves half.

But I have said that dinner would disillusionize you, and have produced nothing to prove it.

Perhaps indeed it will not be dinner, but I *think* so. Amid its quiet perfection you will notice a flaw: the champagne is execrable, or your cigar is a torture to you. Some trifling detail has been scamped, and, what makes it unpardonable, scamped purposely.

Yes, it is odd that the varnish of the class to which Newritch belongs should be so brittle. Where "money is no object," why quarrel with one's wine merchant over an extra sovereign a dozen, or make one's friends ill with inferior tobacco? For Newritch and his class are no misers, and indeed despise money *en bloc*, or affect to despise it.

Their display is aimed at an effect: they forget or they never knew that display to be effectual must be *consistent* as well as continuous. They forget, or they never knew, that no one nowadays will toady a rich tailor for his turtle if he makes them sit down to whist with soiled cards, or ventures to give them a yesterday's napkin. . . .

This stress on the minor economies we hardly notice in the poor or in those of our own class, but we do not forgive them in the self-made millionaire.

If we are to eat his dinners or drink his wines *at all* they must be *perfect*, or we prefer to dine by ourselves or with our friends, where we neither demand nor expect perfection.

And he does not realize, poor Newritch! that this perfection is comparative, and that when we dine with him we demand a perfection in the superlative degree.



THE LITTLE FLEAS.

IT was night : and the long windows barely showed against the gloom of that silent room : high, vague, mysterious, dark—like the place where a man finds himself alone in dreams. The dying fire, when now and again a brand fell into its dull remaining red, lit above two faces—of a man and of a woman. He was stretched on a rug at her feet with his eyes fixed on hers, but she looked into the fire, and he saw that she saw further than the fire. Until at last she said, whispering as a woman whispers at midnight, “Tell me what you see in my eyes,” but he answered, “It was night : and the long windows barely showed against the gloom of that silent room : high, vague, mysterious, dark—like the place where a man finds himself unfriended, alone in dreams. The dying fire when now and again a brand fell into its dull remaining red, lit above two faces—of a man and of a woman. He was stretched on a rug at her feet with his eyes fixed on her eyes, but she looked with her eyes at the fire, and he saw that her eyes saw further than the fire. Until at last she said, whispering as a woman whispers at midnight, ‘Tell me what you see in my eyes,’ but he answered, ‘It was night——’”

But the very shadow had learnt its lesson, and a murmur passed in the vast corners of the hall, “It was night, and the long windows barely showed against the gloom of that silent room : high, vague, mysterious, dark—like the place where a man sobs to himself, all alone in an unfriended dream. . . .”



CAUSERIES DU VENDREDI.

No. VIII.—Walt Whitman (II.).

I HAVE hitherto assumed that Whitman's claim to be the poet of this new world is allowed. To maintain that he is not a poet at all, that *Leaves of Green* is a prose work rather fantastically got up seems to me a mere piece of fighting about words. If any one after reading the book could be convinced by some critic that because Whitman did not write in certain conventional metres he must be denied the name of poet, one would feel sorry for him. If we are to argue about poetry in this way, then let a catalogue of metres be made out beyond which no poet shall be allowed to stray. I do not mean to claim as some of his admirers do that he is the originator of a new poetic form. In fact one must admit that there is about the man and his poems alike a certain lack of restraint and compression—indeed of what we mean by artistic form. But there is a kind of metre in his verse, the lines do not break off arbitrarily but always with a certain fitness, the sense of which grows on you as you read him. And then there is in nearly all his poetry an infinitely varied music and rhythm; in his greatest poems he is in this respect unapproachable. It never palls on you as the music of Tennyson is apt to do; it is always fresh and full of energy. He is a poet who has much to say and who is determined to say it; and after all you cannot force such a man to write in one way rather than another, and as for his being a poet there are two or three short poems of his that would overthrow all the counter arguments that ever grammarian could produce. If the piece beginning "When lilacs last in the dooryard bloomed" is not poetry there is no poetry in the world.

We must remember that he is not an artist in the strict sense. He takes no pains whatever to make a picture. He walks carelessly and yet with an observant eye along the crowded street or among the beauties of

nature, and pours out his feelings as they rise within him. The poems are filled and inspired by that passionate emotion which lay behind the careless exterior of the man, and consequently though his descriptions of natural scenery lack that closeness and exquisite detail which a more artistic poet would have given to them, yet they have an intensity and penetration which never misses its mark. With one or two powerful touches he puts the whole scene before us not as a picture but as a living thing. Take for example the poem "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," or the descriptions of Autumn scenery in many of the war pieces—indeed one could quote numberless examples. His epithets are always powerful and suggest rather than express. His ideal is not to write a book that shall delight men's eyes with beautiful pictures or lull them asleep with beautiful music, but to awaken their powers so that they shall see and hear for themselves.

Most attractive of all is the absolute genuineness and sincerity of it. The man himself shines through every page of it until you get almost to know him as a familiar friend with all his follies and mannerising and his humanity and deep sympathy. "This is no book," he says in the last poem, "Who touches it touches a man." Of poetic diction and artificial phrase he knows nothing, nor is he affected at all by that conventional poetical form which has got such a strong hold on our modern poets and which crushes out the life of all who are not strong enough to rise above it. He has discarded all the traditional poetic machinery, genii, daemons, Greek gods and such like, which the "*Cantores Euphorionis*" have worked to death. He looks the facts of Science boldly in the face and finds that it does not rob nature of her beauty or sublimity. He can describe the beauty of an autumn wood without imagining a weeping nymph in every tree, or the grandeur of the sun without a thought of the fiery chariot of Apollo. All these trappings which have lost all life and meaning long ago, and which are kept up only

as so much tinsel to disguise the poverty of the thought within, Walt Whitman sweeps quite away. He writes with the object itself before his mind, not with the thing as it appeared to poets in the past or as it appears to them now. By his upbringing and course of life he escaped the deadening influence which the constant reading of books produces on the sensibility. He was always more in contact with men than with books.

Perhaps the greatest of his poems are those inspired by the Civil War, through which he went as a nurse in the hospitals. America, the land with which all his hopes and affections were bound up, on which seemed to depend all the prospects of humanity, was suddenly split into two hostile camps. It seemed as if the Union was broken up and the future of America hopelessly ruined.

“Year that trembled and reeled beneath me
Your summer wind was warm enough, yet the air I breathed
froze me,
A thick gloom fell through the sunshine and darkened me.
Must I change my triumphant songs? said I to myself;
Must I indeed learn to chant the cold dirges of the baffled
And sullen hymns of defeat?”

He threw himself into the quarrel with all the passionate ardour of his nature, in fact he gave the best of his life to the cause he had so much at heart. The ultimate triumph of the Union brought back his peace of mind. America, whose future he had often regarded with anxiety and dread, had now proved herself worthy of his hopes. His countrymen had proved by the most terrible of tests that they could leave their trade and money-making to fight and die for a great principle. It is no party triumph that he celebrates—it is the triumph of the South as well as of the North, since it knitted them together more closely than before. The Union was no longer a mere form on paper, but a thing for which men had fought and died. His war poems are great because in them as everywhere else he writes out of his own actual feelings;

and they give, taken together, a most vivid and powerful impression of it. Not only were his patriotic feelings stirred, his whole life with all his interests and hopes hung in the balance; and yet it is not of these great issues that we hear so much in his poems as of the individual men engaged in it. The hard, tiring march, the weary suspense and the horror of the bloodshed appeal to him in the person of every soldier in the ranks. Each life involved in the war is in his eyes a desperate stake, and each life lost a sacrifice of inestimable value. When we read a few of them such as "Vigil strange I kept in the field one night," which is perhaps the greatest of all his war poems, or "The Return of the Heroes," or "The Wound Dresser," or "The Dirge for two Veterans," we cannot but be impressed by the wonderful wealth and depth of Whitman's nature and by his power as a poet.

If we try and discover what it is in these poems that attracts us in spite of all that literary connoisseurs have to say against them we find it in the truth and directness and depth of the man himself, and in his wonderfully poetic imagination. He never writes merely for writing's sake but always as the expression of his intense emotions. It is this that raises him above the mere political philosopher, and that stamps him as a great poet. He has a very varied style which can be at one time rough and uncouth, at another delicate and refined, at another swift and vivid as lightning; but through all his poetry there runs an undercurrent of passion and feeling that betrays the man and tends to give an aspect of sameness to it. He is altogether lacking in that self-restraint which marks the artistic poet. He had no thought of controlling the stream of his emotion or even of consciously directing it, but allows it to carry him on regardless of anything except its own strength. It is useless to stop and question him, for he will not be argued with. "When they argue about God and eternity," he says, "I am silent." You must give yourself up to his

guidance, and when you have got to the end you may look back and consider what it all comes to—whether it is a mere *tour de force* or a real and true poem.

It is this same lack of form and restraint that has made him depart so widely from the conventional and recognised forms of verse. He cannot submit to the long and difficult process of pruning and carving, the *labor limae* of artistic form. His language, too, has often a harshness and stiffness which the slightest care for conformity to the requirements of art would have removed.

After all there seems to be something about metre and rhyme that we cannot get over. They appeal to what we are apt to call an ultimate fact of human nature, and men are moved by them on whom the rhythm and music of Walt Whitman's verse would be utterly lost. His poetry, great as it is, will never take real hold of the mass of men, while a few stanzas of some ephemeral song will cling to them for life. For all his intense ardour in the war and with all the great poems which it drew from him, the mass of his countrymen were more inspired by the song on the obscure John Brown than by any poem of his. But for all this want—and we cannot deny that it is a want—you cannot open this book without feeling at once that you are in the hands of a great poet. There is a force and vigour that is unmistakeable and that lifts you at once into the purer atmosphere of genius. He has widened and deepened the range of human sympathies, and has set the relations of man to his fellow men in a new light altogether, and in this respect he has opened up a fresh field for the poetry of the future. Our poetry lives too much in the past because it has become the custom of the poets to live in retirement, knowing life only through books, and because they can look at the figures of past history or of mythology clearly and steadily, and so depict them with all minuteness of detail while when they look at the actual life of the present they find only a confused and jarring mass of individuals. A great

dramatic poet while he takes his characters from past history or myth puts into them life and meaning for his contemporaries; the ordinary modern poet who writes of Niobes or Persephones simply elaborates a conventional figure—"What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba?" He does so just because it has become a convention of poetry, and not, as did Keats, from a profound insight into the beauty of the conception. Whitman throws off these masks altogether and writes of the present as the present, without disguise or hypocrisy.

The English poet whom he most resembles is Wordsworth, though he does not write with the same consciousness of literary form as Wordsworth did. They both find the inspiration of their poetry in the life of their time, and both have a passionate enjoyment of the scenery of nature; both are filled with the same moral enthusiasm, though in Whitman it is less fettered by the traditions and conventions of the time, less fixed to institutions and creeds, than in Wordsworth. Moreover, Wordsworth has not the keen delight in all human life and activity just as such that Whitman has. Wordsworth was so entirely self-centred that he became quite isolated from the world, and regarded everyone outside his own circle of appreciation with feelings of suspicion and even aversion. He was conscious of himself, not as one of the crowd, but as one set apart and something above his fellows.

Whitman is as self-conscious as anyone, but it is the open and generous self-assertion of a free man among his equals. There is nothing exclusive about him. He makes no pretence to any special revelation. Consequently his interest in men is not restricted by any false notions of dignity or any theories of morality. The fact that a man really does certain things—whether the world call them good or bad—is enough to interest him in them, and in the bad no less than in the good. In imagination he is more quick and subtle than Wordsworth, and in thought equally profound.

But such comparisons are for the most part useless. Instead of setting off the one against the other we should thankfully acknowledge our debt to both. And this we do owe to Whitman that he has not only left to us new ideas of great depth and suggestiveness for the progress of humanity in the future, throwing a new light upon the relations of men to one another and to nature, but he has also written, and that in a time when such things are scarce, a book of true poetry.

D.



BILLY-GO-BLINK.

BILLY-GO-BLINK sat on the sea-brink,
And he wept and he tore his hair ;
And he turned him again to the plain of the main,
But never a sail was there.

But a little while after he bellowed with laughter,
And exceedingly glad was he
To observe that a brig and a thingamy-jig
Came sailing across the sea.

EPIGRAM.

WHEN *Isis* swells above her banks
And folks with rubbish weekly cram it,
It surely can't expect our thanks :
I rather think we ought to *dam* it.

β.

NOTES.

WE notice a marked improvement in the quality of the Christ Church Chronicle, the first number of which has just appeared. The lines on Tennyson are distinctly readable, and the football and athletic notes seem to have been written by one who knows something of these matters.

THE same cannot be said of *Akervaios*, a book of wholly execrable verses, emanating, it is loudly whispered, from Worcester College. Even the *fears* of the author, put rather neatly into the mouth of one of his heroines (a tame rabbit named Winnie), are not likely to be soon realized—

“They’ll cut me up

Before I’ve cut my teeth.”

He seems to have plenty of time before him.

AHMED.

AHMED, my servant and companion, deserves to be commemorated in a few lines. He has so great a respect for a book that it were unpardonable to keep his name out of the pages of this one. Moreover, he is a pleasant person to look upon, slim and active with limbs like those of the Dioscuri in the Naples museum; his eyes are large and brown, generally frank looking and commendably honest, but there is an ugly gleam in them at times; his nose and mouth are delicately moulded and his olive skin is set off by bars of blue tattooed against his ears; his voice is soft and winning and his manner graceful and courteous, yet he can shout in no pleasing fashion when angry, and gesticulate like a madman. He will always remain a mystery, transparent as glass, yet deep as the unfathomable seas; childish and easily pleased, yet cunning as the serpent and easily enraged; humble, yet proud; the contrasts are as forcible as that between sunshine and storm, though I have only hinted at the conflicting elements that combine to form the character of an Arab boy. To explain, even partially to understand, it are beyond the power of a Western intelligence.

Faithful he undoubtedly is and proud of his service. No one is allowed to help me if he is by, for he never tires. Quite honest he is not, for though no offer of great rewards were strong enough temptation to make him injure me, he cannot carry the smallest parcel without appropriating some of its contents; but if another cheated me of so much as a pin's value he would rouse the whole Mousky with the noise of his indignation and threats of vengeance.

He is a queer mixture, is my friend Ahmed, of ignorance and knowledge. This conversation often takes place during my afternoon ride.

"London, has she streets like Cairo?"

"No, the streets of London are quite different."

"Cairo, yes, she has very good streets, and gardens better than London?"

"Much better, but London is much larger."

"London, no she is not bigger than Cairo."

This is said indignantly, with a furtive glance at me to see if I am laughing at him; but if the Egyptian city we are visiting be even Benhur or Zagazig he will still declare it to be larger than London. Paris, which he visited during the exhibition, he persistently regards as a mere village. After a minute or two of silence during which he runs beside my donkey, his eyes obstinately cast on the ground, Ahmed will look up with renewed good temper and say, "I come to London with you. Excusey me, sir, no, she is not very expensive to go to London."

"What would your father say?"

"My father say, Ahmed why not go to London? and I say, my master he say to me why not come to London,? and my father say 'Very well.'"

Ahmed is a scholar in his way, learned in many strange things, and can talk half-a-dozen languages with considerable and inaccurate fluency. He writes Arabic, a not very usual accomplishment, and one he is proud of possessing. He will often note down an English phrase, or my explanations of a phrase that has puzzled him, in Arabic characters for his English master to elucidate further for him in the evening. For, when we are in Cairo, Ahmed and I pursue our studies during the evening, and I confess that his knowledge of English is gained more rapidly than mine of Arabic. Ahmed is not slow to notice this and often exclaims: "I, Ahmed, very poor man, but I very good head. I speak Arab, English, French, Italian, Greek, little German. My master he very rich man, he governor; he not very good head my master, he only speak English, French, and little Arab."

There is a look of pardonable pride on his face as he says these words; but after he has smoked one of my cigarettes he will generously add, "But my master, he speak very well Arab after two months." Yet, in spite of his scorn at my linguistic capacities,

I have seen him knock a man down in the bazaar because he had dared to smile at my pronunciation of an "Arab" sentence.

Ahmed is a temperate person, as are most of his race, but he breaks out at times. Once, after a friend's wedding, he lay, as he expressed it, "like a dead man" for two days. For this freak I fined him ten piastres, but he bore his punishment good-humouredly and borrowed them from me next day to purchase sugar-cane; he has not repaid me, and I have not the heart to deduct it from his wages. Ten tumblers of mastic had caused him to lie as dead, his excuse being that the wedding was a very big affair and his friend had kept saying "Ahmed, you drink more mastic,—and he filled my glass so high and I drink, and then he filled it again ten times till I fall down like dead man." Nevertheless he has no little contempt for Tommy Atkins, who he, declares, drinks too much.

I am inclined to admire Ahmed's hospitable instincts, though I have felt compelled to refuse all further invitations to his weddings. I have already accepted three within four months, and now he is asking me to attend a fourth. I do not dare to appear too inquisitive about his harem, but I should like to know why he gets rid of his wives so quickly. He is barely twenty, and two years ago when I first knew him, was unmarried, and to have divorced since then four wives is scarcely respectable. He has only complained to me of number three, who had "a tongue so long." I fancy she protested against Ahmed's extravagance in dress, for he spends a small fortune in buying silk waistcoats.

But it were ungenerous to dwell long on Ahmed's faults, for his virtues on the whole more than over-balance his failings. It is impossible not to be affectionately disposed towards a man who guards me ceaselessly and carefully, who works for me willingly and cheerfully, who is a lively companion, who sleeps contentedly at the door of my room or outside my tent, who is proud of his master even when my Arabic is

shaky, and who guards my interests eagerly. Surely these are noble qualities, and occasional defects and peccadilloes merely serve to remind me that this admirable Crichton of an Arab is, after all, as mortal as his master.

Cairo.

PERCY ADDLESHAW.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"SELF OR ANOTHER."—A good idea, to which you have hardly done justice.

NICOTIANA, &c.—There seems to be no reason why these should have been written.

W. J. F.—For the purposes of the *Spirit Lamp*, the merit of your verses cannot excuse their length.

Φ.—Fie!

J. W. S.—Your ballad would be better set to music : the *literary* merit of it is not strong enough.

B. (PEMBROKE).—You would certainly write good prose. Why not send us some?

The columns of the *Spirit Lamp* are open to all the talents. Contributions (*prose* preferred) should be sent in by the Tuesday before the day of publication.

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The Spirit Lamp.

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THE NEW REMORSE.

THE sin was mine ; I did not understand.
So now is music prisoned in her cave,
Save where some ebbing desultory wave
Frets with its restless whirls this meagre strand.
And in the withered hollow of this land
Hath Summer dug herself so deep a grave,
That hardly can the leaden willow crave
One silver blossom from keen Winter's hand.
But who is this who cometh by the shore ?
(Nay, love, look up and wonder !) Who is this
Who cometh in dyed garments from the South ?
It is thy new-found Lord, and he shall kiss
The yet unravished roses of thy mouth,
And I shall weep and worship, as before.

OSCAR WILDE.

PEET GYNT.

MR. RUDYARD KIPLING, in one of the less vigorous of his ballads, describes the unhappy condition after death, of a man essentially modern and mediocre. Heaven is too good for him; and the Devil can discover no deed of his, sufficiently scarlet in complexion, to merit hell. He is neither hot nor cold: a stale and unprofitable servant.

Peet Gynt is cousin-german to Tomlinson. In his great poem, "Brand," Herrick Ibsen rebuked the half-heartedness and lack of spirit which he discerned among his countrymen, by creating a figure filled with great and impossible aims; and taller in stature, mental and moral, than the pygmies who surround him. Brand, indeed, pursues to the end the remorseless logic of his motto "All or nothing;" and dashed himself to death against the unyielding rocks of reality: but it is otherwise with Peet Gynt. For the latter is himself the prince of the pygmies; the actual representative of the spirit of compromise; the incarnation of the Scandinavian peoples. And yet he is no mere embodied vice or virtue,—a figment of and apology for a character—as is so often found in the old morality-plays; but a very real being; living, breathing, and, above all, idealising. It is this inveterate habit of idealising, of refusing to look the facts of life in the face, which Ibsen is so fond of satirising, and which is so characteristic of the genuine Teutonic spirit, pure and undefiled. Nor is this the poet's only intention with regard to the inner meaning of the character: Peet is also, in a secondary sense, the dream-ridden Norwegian of a particular epoch. That great movement, the romantic renaissance—which the new spirit of the present century gave birth to amid the ruins of the effete classicism of its predecessors, of whose prophets, to mention two out of many, were Victor Hugo and Sir Walter Scott—has in the view of Ibsen played its part, and has in its turn gone the way of all men and things, becoming a stumblingblock to the present time, a darkened mirror, a perverter of the

truth. So, as Cervantes tenderly smiled away the attenuated shadow of the age of chivalry, Ibsen also laughs at his people and his age; because, though by no means blind, yet they will not see.

Peet is as much an egoist as Sir Willoughby Patterne, without the pathetic grandeur of the Englishman: and yet both have their Laetitia Dales. Solvig waits for Peet patiently through years of loneliness; she would seem, in the poet's view, to rescue his halting soul from the remorseless button-moulder, who wishes to mould him anew into something more profitable; for it is the woman who has the last word in the drama: and it is a word almost maternal in the sense of protection it promises. Ibsen, indeed, seems generally to look to woman for the regeneration of the world. Eve and the serpent are still at war for the possession of man.

Peet cannot get out of his habit of idealising: he reads himself into every faëry tale. He is persuaded that he himself was the hunter of the fable, Gudbrand Glesnë, who was borne over the precipitous Gjende-edge between the horns of a wounded buck; he romances in the death-chamber of his mother (this scene is in direct antithesis to the death-scene in *Brand*,) where he raves of the castle "east of the sun and west of the moon," not unknown to readers of "*The Earthly Paradise*;" he poses as a prophet in Morocco; and he finally manages to outwit Satan himself, without realising why he does so. All through the play Peet is the victim of the "mot" he has learned among the trolls—"To thyself be enough:" he cannot or will not learn the true key of life "Be thyself," by which the poet would seem to mean "Find thy true place in the universe and remain there." And this, perhaps, includes the well-known dictum of Socrates.

Besides the main contention, there are some few allusions scattered throughout the play to politics and other matters of ephemeral interest. Two instances only need be mentioned: they both occur in the scene in the madhouse at Cairo. The fellah with the royal

mummy on his back is a cut at the Swedes, who are extremely proud of their great king Charles XII., and who is represented by the mummy; while the episode of Hahn deploring the extinction of the language of the ourang-outangs is a sly laugh at the Norwegian purists and their "Wardour-street" Scandinavian.

It is curious to remember that this essentially northern saga was written beneath the Italian sky of Ischia and Sorrento.

A. R. BAYLEY.

Pembroke.

THE MAN IN THE NEXT ROOM.

THE man in the next room is a mystery to me. He is a big man, and he has a speaking nose; I say a speaking nose because I fail to see why a nose should not speak every bit as much as an eye. Let speaking nose therefore stand. Of course I don't want to know *why* he is a mystery to me. I am glad, very glad, that he is a mystery to me.

For a big man is no mystery but a mastery, and this is why he is quite repulsive. He seems to have a great many friends, judging at least from the noise they make in his rooms. They seem literally *all boot*. (By the way, why does the man with a great many friends always possess *the same friends*? If one says of a man, "Oh! he has a great many friends," the friends turn out to be the same always). But this man seems to have a great many *different* friends. He seems to know everybody, I mean all the people I don't know. He never seems to be particularly at home, but his friends always are. His rooms are a *lounge*, and I am slightly jealous of him. He is a very nice man, and I have called upon him, but the fact still rankles: *His rooms are a lounge!*

Now I like to make my friends comfortable, but my rooms are *not* a lounge. I give quiet little breakfasts and quiet little lunches, and quiet little teas, and quiet

little dinners, and quiet little suppers, but my friends never seem to drop in at any other times. Of course they *might* drop in, and I ask them to drop in, but as a fact they *don't* drop in.

I expect I am obsolete. When my friends come they don't seem happy, they don't seem at home. They look at my curios and my tiger-skins and my ingenious reading traps, but they don't stay unless I ask them to, and one doesn't always like to do this. Then some of my friends object to my other friends.

Yes: that is a point I am very very proud about, I don't move in any set. *I am a set.* I like to be above cliques and parties and sets, so I know everybody and anybody. But somehow the everybodies and the anybodies don't hit it off and then they blame me. The everybody comes up sometimes for instance and says to me, "Why, know Jones? He is a Philistine." Now Jones *is* a Philistine, but then, as I say to somebody, "I am above sets." And then Jones comes up and says "Why, know Brown? He's one of those beastly high-art chaps." Then I say to Jones, "Why of course Jones, but then I am above sets; I like to know everybody." And afterwards Jones and Brown hate each other worse than before. But what after all has this to do with the man in the next room? I had forgotten him.

And yet he is a very very estimable person, and he wears brown boots. Always? I wonder if his people wear brown boots? Perhaps brown-boots-wearing is hereditary with my next-door neighbour; perhaps it is not. At any rate he wears them. He always has flowers, too, in his rooms, nice flowers, such as you give two shillings a dozen for. If taste is purely a question of bad taste, perhaps my next-door neighbour—called, by the way, Arty—has taste. I *think* he has taste. I tried him the other day, and he seems to have read all the right people and none of the wrong people. I asked him one day if he read Rossetti. "Rossetti? of course, I always take Rossetti to bed with me."

Then I asked him if he had read Swinburne, and he said all his people were so fond of Swinburne that he knew him by heart. Then I asked him if he dearly loved the minor French poets, and he said he dearly loved them and always read them at mealtimes. At last I began to think he was chaffing me, but he soon began to quote all the minor French poets and then I knew he was not. "Did he admire Burne-Jones?" Then he showed me the great big large Burne-Jones picture book, and asked me if I had seen it. I was obliged to say I couldn't afford it but should dearly like a copy. The next morning he sent round one with his compliments, and a verse from a French poet I had never even heard of. He knows everything about all literature, and he seems to write for really good magazines. He showed me some verses of his in *The Century*, and told me that they were actually paid for. I was surprised. But he is a good all round man as well, and has lots of pots about his room. He doesn't usually have them about, he says, "because they are so ugly, but one's friends like one to win things so one wins them," and "that," he continues, "is one's reason for winning them."

Yes.

That of course is one's reason for winning them. Then he writes all kinds of Arnolds, and Lothians, and Newdigates, and things, and *sometimes gets one*. Then he buys one copy for his mother and nobody knows anything about it except the *Oxford Magazine*. And then

But my *friend* in the next room wants me to join him in a quiet rubber, and he plays a *perfect* rubber. So I shall not say anything more about *my friend*, the man in the next room.

Z. Z. Z.

SIR THOMAS JONES.

A BALLAD OF MAGDALEN.

THE moon shines cold on cloister old
And silent is the night ;
It is the hour when Dons have power,
And Sir Thomas sits in his lofty bower
And round him many a wight,
Tried and true, a trusty crew,
And all of them longing for something to do.

The Dean sits in St. Swithun's tower
Drinking the whiskey neat,
And he pillows his hair in a goodly chair
With a "Liddell & Scott" for his feet.

Then up and spake Sir Thomas Jones,
An undergraduate he,
"Now who will dare to leave his chair
And raise the Dean with me?"

Then up and spake a youngern lad,
Sat by Sir Thomas's knee,
"Oh I will dare to leave my chair
And raise the Dean with thee."

And straight uprose the other wights,
In number half a score,
And they took an oath that, by their troth,
They were ready for Don or Devil, or both,
As they'd often been before.

* * * * *

The first yell that the bold Dean heard
He stirred upon his seat ;
The neist yell that the bold Dean heard
He leapt unto his feet.

The third yell that the bold Dean heard
He opened wide the door ;
And the fourth yell that the bold Dean heard
He bounded over the floor.

And faster still and faster
Adown the stair he fled,
And through the quad and cloister
He ran, nor turned his head.

Like one who in the silent streets
 Impales a public lamp,
 And having once done that, retreats
 And wields no more his "gamp,"
 Because he knows a Proctor's man
 Doth close behind him tramp.

So runs the scout at lunch time
 Across the slippery grass,
 While all who list may plainly hear
 The splashing of the college beer,
 The rattling forks and other gear,
 The jingling of the glass.

So ran the Dean and stayed not
 Till he came where he might see,
 By the fitful gleam of a bonfire's light,
 That lawless company.

And there was Brown the fresher,
 Who twice had down been sent,
 And Robinson of Winchester
 Who "ragged" the President.

And Tomkinson the oarsman
 Who steered into a rock,
 And Smithson of the catapult
 Who slew the great peacock ;*
 The great peacock he slew by stealth.
 That praised (in song) its plumèd wealth,
 And shattered nerves and ruined health
 Along the street Long-wall.

* About the beginning of this yeare, ye donnes of Saint Mary's College, commonly called New College, did gette for their pleasaunce and disporte a great foule called a Pea-cocke. Now this same accursed beast by its grievous cries and wailings mightily cast down and dismayed his Majestie's liege and peaceful subjects of Oxenforde which chanced to dwell hard by it, which thinge became at the last a great cause of strife, for ye donnes of Saint Mary's College being of a high stomach would not brook that it should be slaine, declaring that themselves found no discordance in its notes and by all means defending and encouraging the monstrous foule. But at the last cometh one by night with a cunningly devised engine for casting stones, and slayeth it, which indeed though it be a lawless deed is yet, I hold, excusable insomuch that so damnable and grievous a beast ought not to live. Then ye donnes of Saint Mary's College were minded to get them another of these birds but there was like to be a riot among the people when they heard it, which when they saw they were afraid and made no more of their words. [A.D., *From ye Chronicles of Oxenforde.*]

And there was bold Sir Thomas,
And many a one beside,
Who ere this night, in wordy fight,
Had tamed the donnish pride.

But suddenly when in their ranks
The doughty Dean they see,
All start, like one who, as a courter,
Visits, by stealth, some tradesman's daughter
And finds installed the college porter
Revelling in cakes and tea.

For while Sir Tom was making
The squibs and rockets crack
The Dean came up behind, and laid
A hand upon his back.

And the doughty Dean he triumphed,
For he got them all save one,
And Robinson the younger
Alone found legs to run.

* * * *

They fined Sir Thomas Jones
And gated him at eight,
And all the other trusty wights
Endured the same hard fate.

And now in Senior Common Room,
When the oldest wine is brought,
When the Dean is drinking sherry
And the Bursar's swigging port,

When the tallest yarns are spun out,
And the broadest tales will pass,
And "facetiores litterae"
Are plentiful as grass

And when, in short, they're having
A really festive night,
When the oldest dons are *cheerful*,
And the younger dons are tight;

The Dean still tells the story,
In soul-inspiring tones,
Of how alone he faced a score
Or twenty-five, or even more,
And caught Sir Thomas Jones.

ALFRED DOUGLAS.

THE PURGATORY.

OXFORD, who loves to dream of Dante among her pilgrims, has rarely sent forth a more welcome work of a more gracious scholarship than this version of the Purgatory, by Mr. Shadwell, Fellow of Oriel: a version introduced by Mr. Pater, Fellow of Brasenose. All that is commonly said of Oxford's graces, or of Oxford's elegancies, whether in praise or blame, comes to mind upon the reading of this book; but the blame which lies with a certain languid delicacy and nerveless ease, sometimes attributed to Oxford writing, is impossible here. Mr. Shadwell has a preface of eight pages, Mr. Pater's introduction fills fifteen; yet for delightful precision of hard, logical criticism, reasoned, measured, definite, these two pieces of writing are masterpieces. Mr. Shadwell gives four reasons for his choice of Marvell's stanza in his version, Mr. Pater gives four reasons for the freshness and vitality of our modern attraction towards Dante; and I know not where to find more fortunate examples of close, convincing literary argument, put out with an admirable charm and beauty in spirit and in form. To convey pleasure to the whole mind, its sense of beauty and its care for truth, in this charmed way, is the writer's perfection, the crown of his scholarship and of his art. And the good manners of it! the urbanity, the courtliness, the simple mastery! Here is no rugged, ragged clumsiness of learning; no pretty petty foppishness of taste; here are just the serenity and the severity of good writing. These times of the pedant and the amateur have not too much of this fine quality, golden in its wise discretion.

Most lovers of Dante love but to meet him "in the milder shades of Purgatory," where

"the grieved and obscure waters slope
Into a darkness quieted by hope,"

as Milton and as Browning have it. May it be in part because they feel themselves more at home with

penitence and penance than with perdition and beatitude? And the austerity of Dante is never so tender as in the Purgatory; the human pity of the man goes out to the thought of it. Mr. Shadwell, then, has well done to translate the second Cantica; would that he had translated the whole of it! True, his version ends at a clear point; but the few remaining cantos, the vision of Matilda among the flowers, the vision of Beatrice, are in Dante's greatest manner. *Ben son, ben son Beatrice!* Yet it were a perverse ingratitude to our benefactor to reproach him for not giving us more than, in his deliberate judgment, he has thought good to give. His choice of Marvell's stanza is an inspiration of genius: as no other metrical scheme does it render the majesty of Dante's music, its clean, clear movement: that singular gravity which makes simplicity solemn, whilst leaving it natural and free. What Lamb, with his wonted insight, said of Wither's favourite measure may be said of Marvell's mighty line: "What longer measure can go beyond the majesty of this?" With an happy effect of compensation, the austere brevity of Marvell's rhythm, so terse and strong, becomes equivalent in the ear to Dante's elaborate linked rimes; Marvell's music carries us on with a like prolongation of repeated harmonies. The unique beauty of sound in the two shorter lines, with their stately closing syllables, does unquestionably reproduce the characteristic pauses and closes of Dante's more intricate cadence. All this, the rhythmical fashion of verse, Mr. Shadwell has meditated finely, producing a version of Dante, quite simple, quite dignified, and quite unforced. Other versions have their own great merits; but all of them have made Dante seem odd, quaint, a not perfectly comfortable poet, not wholly his own master: too much of a Lucretius, too little of a Virgil. One matter of detail may be brought before Mr. Shadwell here. He writes that, next to the triple rime, Dante's metrical characteristic is his use of the stanza: and that the *terza rima* has never been used by any English poet for original

composition. Certainly Byron, Shelley, Mrs. Browning, Mr. William Morris, neglect Dante's rule, but I may quote these lines from that strangely neglected poem, Canon Nixon's *Mano* :

"This Poem, in the Italian's measure made,
Commended be, if it some deal observe
The law which on his verse the master laid,
From which the most do in our language swerve,
Who have put forth the triple rime to essay,
(Many of greater name than I deserve),
That round the stanza still the structure play,
At end arrested somewhat : this his law,
Who gave such wondrous music to his lay."

But it is time to give some examples of Mr. Shadwell's art. Mr. Pater observes that the translator is "perhaps not least successful in the speculative or philosophic passages." Mr. Shadwell has indeed, for instance, excellently rendered the doctrine of Aquinas, upon the lips of Statius, from the words of Dante, into the metre of Marvell; but such passages are not too apt for quotation. Here is a simpler passage :

"As from the pen forth issuing creep
One, two, and three, the timid sheep;
With eyes and muzzle pressed
To earthward stand the rest;
As doth the first, the others do;
And if one pauseth, they pause too,
Huddling, they know not why,
In mute simplicity.
So coming forth did I behold
The leaders of that blessed fold,
Their movements clothed with grace,
With modesty their face."

Here is the meeting with Sordello the Mantuan :

"We came. O spirit, Lombard born,
What pride was there, what love of scorn!
In movement of thine eye
What stately gravity!
Never a word he deigns to say;
But let us pass upon our way,
Watching us in such guise
As lion couched that lies."

Note how Mr. Shadwell has made each word of the Italian yield its full significance; how dexterous the phrase "stately gravity" for *onesta e tarda*. Again:

"I saw the Angel there, who came
The peace long wept for to proclaim,
And to unclothe the door
Of heaven denied before."

Nothing can perfectly render the *molt'anni lagrimata pace*, that exquisitely Dantesque phrase; yet the English is pure and fine in the extreme.

"O Saul, how there, thy sword thrust through thee,
Upon Gilboa's hills I knew thee,
Where never shall again
Fall dew nor any rain"!
"Euripides and Antiphon
Are with us there, and Agathon,
Simonides, and more
Whose brows the laurel wore."

When the translator is compelled to a greater concision than usual, he shows a rare skill in distilling the whole essence of Dante's words into one brief line; thus, in a famous place:

"The hour was come that on the sea
Softens the heart with memory,"

where, "with memory" represents the *che volge il disio*. Let us take one more passage, the stoning of Stephen, which Mr. Shadwell transmutes into the very semblance of a superb original lyric.

"And then I saw an angry crowd
Gather about a youth, that loud
Were crying 'Slay him, slay,'
And stoned him as he lay.
I saw him overborne by death,
That bowed him to the earth beneath:
Only he made his eyes
Gates to behold the skies,
To his high Lord his prayer outpouring,
Forgiveness for his foes imploring:
Even in that pass his face
For pity making place."

Ma degli occhi facea sempre al Ciel porte.

These examples will serve, these out of many, to illustrate the choice art of this new translator. He has confronted a doubly difficult adventure: for, apart from the rendering of Dante, it is to be remembered that there was further the task of rendering him into a metrical form, almost consecrated and unique, as the mould of a masterpiece. But Mr. Shadwell has caught the happy spirit of Marvell's Ode: which contains lines curiously like Dante's various works. When scholastic terms and moral thoughts are something hard in Dante, to disentangle and to set in order, he writes much in the manner of Marvell's

"For 'tis all one to courage high
The emulous or enemy;
And with such, to enclose
Is more than to oppose."

And these lines might be a version of some well wrought simile in Dante:

"So when the falcon high
Falls heavy from the sky,
She, having killed, no more does search,
But on the next green bough to perch,
Where, when he first does lure,
The falconer has her sure."

Curiously considering it, this is a very great thing that Mr. Shadwell has done: this version of Dante in the stanza of Marvell: a double triumph that he has deserved. In his beautiful version, those who have no Italian are enabled, as Milton wrote, *ad illum Dantem libenter et cupide commessatum ire*. And with what spiritual profit! For while Mr. Swinburne may waste his words in reviling "the dead and malodorous level of mediaeval faith," less acrid spirits are beginning now to understand something of that vast structure in thought and faith, which Dante lit up with his fires of Hell, his mild lights of Purgatory, and his Paradise of the *Luce eterna*, the *candida Rosa*. It is barely possible to read Dante, from end to end, without feeling, what Owen Feltham has expressed, in words for once inspired, "Whatsoever is rare, and passionate, carries the soul

to the thought of Eternity. And, by contemplation, gives it some glimpses of more absolute perfection, than here 'tis capable of. When I see the royalty of a state-show, at some unwonted solemnity, my thoughts present me something, more royal than this. When I see the most enchanting beauties, that Earth can show me; I yet think, there is something far more glorious: methinks I see a kind of higher perfection, peeping through the frailty of a face. When I hear the ravishing strains of a sweet-tuned voice, married to the warbles of the artful instrument, I apprehend by this a higher diapason: and do almost believe I hear a little Deity whispering, through the pory substance of the tongue. But this I can but grope after. I can neither find, nor say, what it is." It was a prerogative of the genius in Dante, that he could find it, and could say what it was: interpreting the worlds with a lucid faith, a bold strength, which are not now grown childish, nor yet coarse. Nay, there is more matter of possible offence in the *Dream of Gerontius* than in the *Divine Comedy*. In especial, the *Purgatory*, as Mr. Pater delicately pleads, with its tender wistfulness of love and hope, should find fit audience now, and now not few. *Una lagrimetta*, thought Dante, could do so much, at the last of all, for the worst of men! Finally: whether or no we say, with Baudelaire,

Les morts, les pauvres morts, out de grandes donleurs,
none will refuse to say, or perhaps to sigh, with M. Verlaine:

Les morts sont morts, douce leur soit l'éternité !

LIONEL JOHNSON.



AMOR MYSTICUS.

VERSION IN SONNET FORM. BY MARIANUS.

(1) *From Greek Anthology.*

“**W**HERE is thy bow, thy backward-bending bow?
 Where are the reeds thou planted in the heart?
 Where are thy wings? thy torch? thy grievous
 dart?

Three crowns thou bearest in thine hands, I trow,
 And one upon thine head! Ah! wherefore so?”
 “The Love men buy and sell in open mart
 Ne’er gave me birth; I am not as thou art,
 A child of wild delights that come and go.

Sprung not of earth, I kindle evermore
 Pure Learning’s torch in minds unstained and fair,
 And by my grace the soul to heaven is led;
 Four crowns I twine, as there be virtues four;
 Three in my hands for virtues three I bear,
 But with the Crown of Wisdom crown my head.

(2) *From Meleager (Anthology), Honey of Love.*

Parched and athirst one summer day
 I chanced to kiss my dainty love,
 And straight my thirst was done away,
 Whereon I cried, Dost drink, O Jove,
 Thy Ganymede’s nectarean kiss?
 Grants he to thee this cup of bliss?
 For when I kissed my fair one’s lip,
 And won from him the promised toll,
 Ah! then I sipped or seemed to sip
 The fragrant honey of his soul!

(3) *Callimachus (Anthology), Set a Thief to catch a Thief.*

Our friend was wounded, all the truth we knew,
 Didst mark how bitter was the sigh he drew?
 At the third glass the roses of his wreath
 Their petals shed, and strewed the ground beneath.
 Love’s fire he feels and feels it to his grief,
 Good cause have I, ye Gods! for my belief;
 A thief myself, I can detect a thief!

(4) *Meleager. A Vision of Beauty (adapted slightly).*

I saw Alexis walking thro' the dell
At noontide hour when Summer 'gan to fell
 The bearded grain ;
And two-fold rays consumed me ; rays of Love
From his dear eyes, and rays from Sol above.
 But these again
Were by the Night allayed ; those other beams
By Beauty's phantom shining in my dreams
 Were kindled higher ;
And sleep, that rests the careworn, brought me care ;
Fashioning in my soul an image fair,
 A living fire !

P. L. O.

CAPRICE (Par P.L.O.).

LA CIGARETTE.

CIGARETTE à douce odeur,
Les tourbillons de ta vapeur
Ressemblant à la vie humaine,
Qui n'est que vaporeuse et vaine.

Comme dans l'air la vapeur fuit,
L'âme qui meurt s'évanouit
Dieu s'écrie ! Ah, si l'on regrette
Roulons une autre cigarette !



δί' ἐλέου καὶ φόβου.—*Aristotle.*

THE idea of going back, as a master, to the school at which I had spent three years as a boy, tickled my fancy enormously. Lying back in the corner of my first-class compartment—for a master has more dignity to preserve than an undergraduate, although his purse be no longer—I mused upon the probabilities of the coming month. Gradually that odd nervousness which always accompanies a journey to school came upon me again; I had thought it was dead for ever. Then I clung to my younger brother's last words of encouragement: "At all events you can't be worse than some of the masters we had." One of them seemed to rise before me as I had seen him stand, pathetically, when after every morning school his whole class stood up upon the desks and hissed at him. I shuddered. Oxford and its Schools had given me belief in my luck; but Oxford life had left me hopeless of ever regaining my powers of application. My old class-master had just met me on the London platform and had not known me, but it did not want that to tell me I had changed in ten years.

Arrived at length. I hurried to the room assigned me in the masters' lodgings. A former occupier had passed the first weeks of melancholia in painting the doors, fireplace, and mantelpiece a bright orange colour! I had never understood before how terrible the craving can be for some bright spot in one's life. On the table lay a letter in my father's hand-writing; it contained a few of those pithy sentences in which it has been his habit, at the end of every holidays and of every vacation, to sum up his impressions of my character, and point the moral of my faults. "I am curious to see," it ran, "whether this new life will increase your natural irritability." And, "Now that your life will be a sedentary one, you will find that you cannot eat half the quantity of food that you get through at home." Again, "If your work is much with books during the day, you had better take care of your eyes. If you read newspapers, etc., in your spare time, you will soon lose what little sight you have." It is from such letters that I have learned to smile grimly as men do in books.

I went out, feeling chilled. Five minutes' walk uphill—which, I realised, would have to be done every morning before breakfast—brought me to the school. I passed its back-doors with a sigh almost of relief, and, flinging open the iron front gate, marched up the stone-flagged path with an air intended to combine defiance with good humour. But my tug at the bell was too violent for anything but nervousness, and the butler's smile showed it. He ushered me—I felt the word like a blow—into the large and lofty drawing-room, in which the headmaster's daughters were dispensing tea to an ever-changing group of parents and boys. Introduced as an old boy and new master, I tried to make myself useful by pressing a poor little brute to have some cake. At the second request he got up and burst into tears, and had to be led away hastily to a window by his mother. After that I tried to be amusing. In an armchair next to me sat a sturdy young ruffian with a devil-may-care expression. I said to him, "Well, we're both new boys together." "Oh," said he, "I've been to three boarding schools already"; and I subsided, reflecting sadly that the rascal had already got two capital stories to repeat in the schoolroom; the "blubbing" of the other boy, and my fatuous remark!

But there was tragedy in the air besides farce. Opposite to us sat a mother, trying to be brave; I only caught one word, "India," and the lump was in my throat, too.

A lull in the pressure of arrivals gave me an opportunity of asking my hostess whether most mothers cried on these occasions. "Oh, yes," she said, "More mothers than fathers; but when the fathers do weep, they weep so violently!" It had been long my wish to see the proverbial strong man weep, so I stayed a little longer, till the headmaster's study door opened, and a tall, business-like father appeared, sobbing. One glance was enough, and I escaped to the boys' part of the house.

Tea was just beginning in the large, bare dining-room; the deafening chatter of a hundred voices ceased as I entered, and if ever I felt a fool in my life, it

was when I was making my way to the master's table in the centre. And allow me to know something about feeling a fool; I remember when I was made straight from a fag into a prefect, and had to tell those astonished dignitaries that I had come to join their mess at breakfast!

The German master sprang to his feet; "What! Smith? *Smith*?? SMITH???" Well, I never! So you have come back! *You*! I would never have believed it! Come to join the galley! Well, I *am* glad to see you: but,—SMITH!!!" This was encouraging. I had not looked at it in that light!

There were others of the masters, whom I had worked under ten years before, and amid a fire of question and answer, exclamations and laughter, I attacked my meat tea: it was six o'clock.

Enough of that; but I shall never forget that when I asked one, whom I had known well, to pass the bread, he remarked: "Still got an appetite, Smith? You won't have that long!" Or again, how politely I addressed another: "I'm afraid you have got a very bad cold," only to be met by the reply, not meant, I know, to be chilling: "*You'll* have a good many colds before you've done with this!" Should I ever, should I *soon* be like that? They all had a tired look on their faces.

As I walked home that night, not very buoyantly, I heard rattling down the hill behind me, towards the station, the unmistakable wheels of a hansom. I turned instinctively, and in the instant's light, as it dashed by, saw the faces of a lady and a boy. I thought she seemed a little vexed and worried, but his face had something about it unearthly, startling. He was gazing straight before him with a far away look in his eyes; his heart was bursting with joy, with relief. I guessed what it was; his mother had brought him down on the chance of there being room for him at the last moment, but there was no vacancy, and for four months more he was safe,—at home.

I went on to my dreary room.

THE PELICAN.

**A SHORT NOTE UPON A NEW VOLUME
OF POEMS.**

SILHOUETTES

BY ARTHUR SYMONS.

ALTHOUGH the rare and exquisite books of M. Paul Verlaine have been much read and more talked of by all English people who lay any claim to culture, yet we know of no recent volume of verse which bears stamped upon it any trace of his influence, save the one Mr. Symons has just given us. If the slight volume of silhouettes had but little merit, yet it would claim attention for this one characteristic, namely that he is the first English poet to produce verse thoroughly steeped in the delicious languor and exotic ennui which are the very essence of the great French master's being.

Like Verlaine he is an impressionist, and strives to express his impressions in the simplest words possible—words simple indeed yet chosen carefully. If, as one great English critic said, it is the consummation of literary art to express one's ideas in the most suitable language, then Mr. Symons is a very great artist indeed and has no parallel amongst all our minor poets.

Take as example the first poem in the book "After Sunset;" the idea is slight, the words and metre simple, yet it is filled with a strange and subtle charm. It is as follows :

"The sea lies quieted beneath
The after-sunset flush,
That leaves upon the heaped grey clouds,
The grape's faint purple blush.
Pale, from a little space in heaven
Of delicate ivory,
The sickle moon and one gold star
Look down upon the sea."

This is pure impressionism ; it is like a picture of Whistler's, or one of the wonderful atmospheric studies of William Stott of Oldham.

Being a disciple of Paul Verlaine and less directly of Rossetti, there is little nationality in Mr. Symonds, he is more French than English, and this may alienate him from careless readers. But if we miss in his verse any note of really English tone, yet we are also spared that vulgar bombast and cheap patriotism which disfigure the works of another minor poet—Mr. Blunt.

Mr. Symonds is *décadant* to the core, there is nothing in him of that *joie de vivre* which is so strong a feature in the English character. He writes as one bored with life; he is a pessimist and a cynic. Nearly every poem in the book is unhealthy; the atmosphere is that of the hot-house. Those of the poems which deal with nature are melancholy in the extreme, and those that deal with mankind show a morbid love of depicting sin in its most hectic colours. Mr. Symonds studies human nature upon the Boulevards and in the music halls, and the results of his studies are certain poems in the book which more closely resemble "Jenny" than anything which has been written since Rossetti died.

To those who see no charm in decay, and whose ideals of beauty are confined entirely within the limits of the healthy and the normal, it would be futile to recommend such a book. These are the orchids of the muse, and he who loves but wild-flowers may not approach them.

But the chosen few who love their Baudelaire as well as their Matthew Arnold: to whom the air of the hot-house laden with the overpowering perfume of exotics is welcome as the breezes that blow over sea-bound meadows, these will find in this slender book precious works of art which, bizarre though they be, nevertheless shew that the spirit of beauty still lives amongst us.

STANLEY ADDLESHAW.

FROM MIMNERMUS.

NO us like leaves which in the flower of spring
Grow nurtur'd by the sun's fast fostering rays,
E'en so for one brief cubit space of days,

Youth's flowers bring
Delight.

Then from above we feel not any breath
For good or ill: but close the black fates stand,
One holding cruel Age within her hand,
The other, Death.

Ah! slight

Too slight the fruits of youth's quick fading tree,
Which like a passing gleam of sunshine fly:
'Tis better when those days have passed to die
Than thus to be
Alive—

For then wild waves of trouble on us roll:
Our house is wasted of its substance, till
The aching void of poverty to fill,
With weary soul
We strive.

Others with eager longing for the birth
Of children vainly sigh: yet they too go,
They pass still longing to the shades below,
Under the earth.
Again,

Unsatisfied—Another strives to live,
Tho' sickness fills him with soul-killing care.
Nor wilt thou find one man to whom his share
Zeus does not give
Of pain.

ῥγγ.

THE present number of *The Spirit Lamp* appears, and all future numbers will appear, under the sole editorship of LORD ALFRED DOUGLAS.

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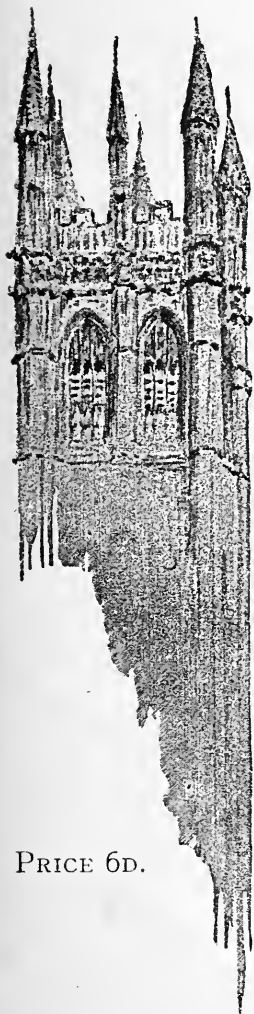
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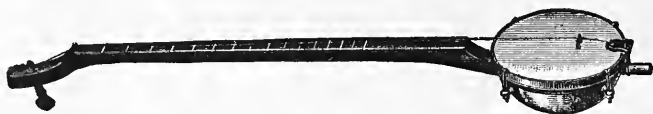
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VOL. 3. No. I.

FEB. 3, 1893.

AMORIS VINCULA.

AS a white dove, that in a cage of gold
Is prisoned from the air, and yet more bound
By love than bars, and will not wings unfold
To fly away, though every gate be found
Unlocked and open : so my heart was caught,
And linked to thine with triple links of love.
But soon, a dove grown wanton, false it sought
To break its chain and, faithless quite, to rove
Where thou would'st not, and with a painted bird
Fluttered far off : but when a moon was past,
Grown sick with longing for a voice unheard
And lips unknissed, spread wings and home flew fast.
And lo ! what seemed a sword to cleave its chain,
Was but a link to rivet it again.

ALFRED DOUGLAS.

THE LAST DAYS OF THE UNIVERSITY.

THE last days of the University form the most romantic chapter of its long history. From the general overthrow of national institutions, which distinguished the first years of the great Reforming Parliament of 1898, the University of Oxford emerged safe. Marked out by her wealth, her learning, her reputation, and her antiquity as the natural prey of the Socialist leaders, she owed to the loyalty of her sons a fresh lease of life, in which, for a period, the fire of her spirit burned with extraordinary brightness, before finally its light was quenched. In that battle of Armageddon the sister University went down. The arrest of three persons of notorious character had brought it into sharp conflict with the Town of Cambridge: that year it happened that the Mayor was also member of Parliament—a man high in the councils of the democrats and embittered from boyhood towards the University. The son of a local plumber he had thrice been proclaimed the most certain choice for the University Cricket Eleven, and thrice had seen the season pass without receiving an invitation to play for his 'Varsity. When the question, what was to be done with the Universities, came before Parliament his vehement and tireless attack carried the day against the foundations of Saints and Sovereigns, and three votes made up the majority which decided that the first experiment of a University for the million should be tried on the banks of Cam. The debate had lasted two days, and the Oxford party left the House ten years older, but having done for their University what once her Colleges could not do for their king—saved her honour and her life together.

How much she spent in the contest will never be known, but it is said that thirty-seven private fortunes were drained to the last penny in her service, and more than one Radical member laboured for the rest of his days under the gravest suspicion of venality.

But Oxford was safe for a time. The Conservative rally throughout England had startled the most careful organizers in the opposite camp. Wherever books were read, wherever gentlemen played games, thence came money and enthusiasm and protests. And the feeling was so strong that the majority forebore extremes. Therefore, at the inevitable price of the loss of her Representatives in Parliament, Oxford retained her freedom and her revenues. Then her rescuers claimed their reward. There must be no more shilly-shallying about Reform, no more taint of sound commercial education; *Litteræ Humaniores* should again be a reality—God knows the public-school head-masters had little voice now! Harrow had become a Socialist centre, where Doctor Weldon lectured at the request of Mr. Tom Mann! And as for practical education in London, in Birmingham, in Manchester, Local Boards were supplying technical instruction and free breakfasts to all who asked.

So for a time Oxford was the home of everything cultivated, everything that gives pleasure after meat and drink and clothes. To Oxford crowded the men of Science and of Art; poets and philosophers jostled one another in her streets, just as in time of floods in tropical lands, strange and beautiful creatures of every kind find refuge together on any hillock that the waters make an island. While the long-deferred deluge of Reform was beating all other delightful things of the land into one level sea of muddy mediocrity, this City of Towers still stood like an Ark, and hoped for the rainbow.

As the last stronghold of Constitutionalism, Oxford became more truly than ever the Home of all Lost Causes. It is true that throughout towns and villages the Church was still fighting bravely on, but she used Oxford as her arsenal. And the Stage, elsewhere bewildered by daily regulations, and shackled by ubiquitous inspectors, blazed forth in the little theatre off the Cornmarket in such Opera, and Comedy, and

Tragedy as the century had never dreamed of. The death of the Poet Laureate of the day, in the Cathedral Church of Christ one Sunday evening, afforded a subject which at least one artist made immortal, and the Edition de Luxe which the Clarendon Press published of his last volume, is unique among the treasures of our Public Libraries for the splendour of its illustrations, the magnificence of its binding, and the exquisite beauty of its type,—every initial letter of which reveals the most curious fancy and incredible cunning of illumination,—no less than for the weird music of the last poetic voice of that England which was once called merrie.

In those days to proclaim oneself a Liberal was to court social ostracism; Radical was synonymous with Renegade. Yet there were two or three found, young men, born into the possession of vast wealth, which they were conscious they had done nothing to deserve, and therefore itched to make a proper use of. These with their followers occupied adjacent rooms in the High Street of the city, made a great point of keeping in touch with the Radical leaders in London, and always appeared in public wearing green hats and ties. But the University was in no humour for coquetting with the enemy; men felt that this was a time to close ranks and hold no parley. The whole party returned together one night after attending a demonstration in Trafalgar Square, without leave; they found the Proctors at the station, and next morning were sent down for good. With a general sigh of relief the University again plunged into the excitement of its new life, so strangely and intensely stimulated.

But these Halycon days could not endure. In one of its earliest sessions Parliament passed a bill that compelled every male person between the ages of sixteen and sixty to work for six hours a day. This measure cleared Oxford in twenty-four hours. It was the last morning of the Summer Races, when a telegram announcing the majority in favour of the bill

reached the Vice-Chancellor. That evening the crowds on the barges and banks surpassed all experience. Gaily dressed from roof to water's edge with garlands of flowers and leagues of banners, the barges heeled till they were in danger of overturning. The last race of the last "Eights" was rowed, and won and lost; and then, amid the most profound silence, the last Head of the River, boat and crew draped all in black, rowed slowly down and up between the attentive thousands on either hand,—for the last time. Next day there were none in Oxford, but grey-beards.

They held a meeting in the Sheldonian. The oldest Professor was for dynamite; he proposed to blow up every Church, every College, every University building in the city; "Remember the fate of Cambridge," said he; "rather than see Oxford defiled by the hands of these barbarians, turned to vile uses of a viler pro-letariat, let us go down together with our flag flying. 'The hour is come.'" He found support, but calmer counsels prevailed. At the suggestion of the Vice-Chancellor, the Heads of Houses offered to receive sexagenarians of good character who should be able to pass the ordinary matriculation examination. That night the quads. were alive once more; every College was full, to the topmost rooms of its tallest New Buildings; it was like an universal Gaude, on a Titanic scale. For weeks the excitement never flagged. The Six Hours Bill had emptied two-thirds of the Fellowships in Oxford; and lists of vacant Tutorships filled an extra sheet of the "Magazine." The air was thick with examinations; the competitors for the first group of scholarships included three Head Masters, a distinguished General, seventeen Cambridge Professors, and an Arctic explorer. Men said that the standard of excellence attained in compositions for the University Prizes was higher than ever; how should it not be so, when the old practice of public disputations was revived, and a man might listen to Froude and Gardiner wrangling upon the function of historians, or compare

his notes with Huxley's after the Bampton Lecture? But their midnight conversations were the glory of the new undergraduates. Reminiscences of School, stories of Proctors, gave way to the curious experiences of a lifetime, the most compromising secrets of the world of business, of politics, of diplomacy, the most incredible adventures in lands yet unnamed and only once discovered. Perhaps the change of tone was most marked in the Clubs and Common Rooms. Games were no longer the inevitable theme of all, from the lounge in the sofa-corner to the reading-man dropping in for a look at the telegrams; for, though at Chess and Golf and Billiards the University could laugh at the brightest reputations ever won in Light-blue silk, yet Cricket and Football were things of the past. Politics, the rescue of the Constitution, were in everybody's mouth,—discussed from every standpoint of principle and expediency, of ancient saws and modern instances, of philosophic theory and civilized or uncivilized practice. In the phrase of the time, to know Oxford was a Conservative Education.

Out of this chaos of individualism a natural English tendency evolved Order in the form of Party. All varieties of opinion crystallized into two schools representing Moderate doctrines and Extreme principles. The one side counted all who were content to bide their time; who held that since Oxford had been saved, the word crisis was no longer applicable, and who were openly confident of her capacity to influence the triumphant democracy for good. These men believed in the innate "common sense" of the British working-classes; for themselves they selected the word *sane*, as expressing their attitude of mind. On this subject their opponents used very strong language,—as, indeed, upon most subjects. They saw no good in temporizing; not only patriotism but honour itself demanded their unflinching resistance to every fresh step made by the government. Hitherto the educated classes had ever led the nation; should they now tacitly stand aside, and watch it

plunge blindly into one madness after another, posterity would have little pity for their fate. No feeling of wounded pride, far less any cowardly fear of the loss of what little had been rescued from the wreck, should prevent them from sacrificing leisure, wealth, if need be life itself in the service of their country. "Our deaths will at least give England time to think," they said. To this the Moderates replied that an hopeless opposition would only drive the enemy to more sweeping measures; it was madness to strengthen the hands of the extreme revolutionaries. "We are riding a runaway horse; let us keep our strength to guide it round the corners of the road." "You are approaching a precipice," was the answer; "and you will not use the curb."

Meanwhile the government troubled itself little about the emotions of the city of refuge, the one little backwater in the stream of Progress. Struggling with the problems of Financial Reform, of Labour-regulation, of Foreign Affairs, it was unconscious of an opposition which was practically inarticulate; for the last election had reduced the Reactionary members in Parliament to a single figure. At vast expense the Oxford die-hards launched a great newspaper, which contained twice the matter of the "Times" at the price of one penny. Its information was carefully selected from the best text-books on Political Economy, and Social Ethics; its correspondents penetrated the recesses of the kingdom, seeking instances of the failure, or the evil effects of Radical legislation,—and they collected thousands such, without influencing a hundred votes. What paid better was the story that mocked a new representative's manners, or commented caustically on his private morals. Borrowing a hint from "The Star" this new "Freeman" planned and carried out a most systematic programme of personal abuse of the working classes; on these lines its headings and bills alone secured it an enormous circulation.

At Oxford the decent people of the Moderate section

washed their hands of the rag, at every Common Room meeting. The editors responded with a separate University edition containing "College news" that made the quieter dons writhe in their beds. So because the venture deserved success, its chance came at last. By some heaven-sent good-fortune—in its manager's words—one of its agents lit upon a clue to the occasional disappearance of a noted Radical minister. Following it up with ferret-like persistency he discovered a series of facts which burst upon his employers as a special miracle, and upon England as a providential warning. The Nonconformist conscience answered nobly to the call; the Cabinet was forced to surrender one of its most capable members, and although the scandal did but delay the course of business for a few weeks in a session that knew no vacations, still the incident served to call attention to the undying hostility of the University. The jolt to Democracy's triumphant car had been too severe.

It happened that at this moment Parliament had before it one of a series of Bills for the Better Taxation of Land. No difficulty was found in attaching to the measure a clause providing for the inclusion of the property of the University of Oxford, which had before been exempt from new duties under the special conditions extorted in the first session. This spelt ruin to the Colleges, and the Extremists went about in bodily fear, so fierce a blaze of indignation burst forth from those good and harmless souls who had hoped to end their lives within those quiet courts and under the shadows of those stately towers. When the dissension was at its height there came the Chancellor of the University, still hailed leader of the Tory party, and honoured not least in Oxford by the faction which strove to be worthy of that master of "flouts and jeers." His authority quelled the tumult of aged animosity, but he brought no hope. Day after day he sat in council with the dignitaries of the University; until some of the milder party despaired of any result, and

retired to put into effect a last scheme of their own. A chosen deputation proceeded to London and sought an interview with the venerable Prime Minister of the Queen. He received them with infinite courtesy, which if anything could have done so, would have softened the humiliation of their position. The boon they asked was nothing short of this; that the name of that ancient Alma Mater, of which he had ever been so proud to call himself a son; in which he had heard, and had delivered so many lectures; for which he had been elected, and from which he had been dismissed, and yet had borne against her no resentment,—that the name of Oxford should not be blotted out utterly from the land. For her sake they besought him to ask a favour from Parliament; that one College, though it were but a little one, might be suffered to retain a scanty revenue, enough to secure for it the possibility of a corporate existence.

The old man was touched; he left them, and on that very day claimed from the House of Commons one exception from their iron principles,—for the sake of a sentiment. By what means he succeeded, they knew not, but returned to Oxford that night with joy unspeakable. But the others had taken their decision, and, rather than receive mercy from the foe they detested, had shaken off the dust from their feet, and sought in our mighty colony of southern seas an England that still could reverence the traditions born of a splendid history.

EDMUND PHIPPS.



MIRANDUS.**A PLATONIC IDYLL.**

THE Conductor of the Grand Orchestra, which plays daily on the pier at Llan . . . (the rest is neither here nor there) was taking his benefit. M. de Beaulieu—naturally the programme styled him Mons de Beaulieu—as usual in such cases was about to introduce to the public a choice little thing of his own, the overture to a new opera, which shall some day eclipse the Herodiade. A dress suit of serviceable black, a very baggy “dicky,” and well cleaned gloves adorned his person as he stepped forward with a marvellous bow to his desk in the Band’s midst. The minor officials of the Pier Company formed a compact little claue in the sixpenny seats, and their vigorous efforts startled the audience into a show of life. A few hundred lack-lustre eyes were turned on the platform; here and there tiny children wriggled under the complacent regard of British motherhood; a few knickerbockered young men from Cottonopolis lounged against the iron pillars in attitudes studiously statuesque; there were many young maidens in the Hall.

The great work began with a soft and solemn movement on muted strings. A striking effect was to be produced towards the end of it by an unexpected clash of the cymbals; the cymbalist visibly thrilled with expectation; his left hand held one of the cumbrous pieces of metal high in the air, while the other was supported against his breast. A little bald-headed man peered out from behind a colossal drum, and watched his fellow percussionist with jealous eyes. ’Tis not over easy to hold a cymbal in position for long, and at the critical moment his left hand swung out of the curve, and the virtuoso missed his stroke. Whereat the warden of the “gospel drum” thwacked his sheepskin mightily, the conductor looked round with rage, the score floated slowly down into the reserve seats and certain well-bred women tittered. Moreover, a pursy little German, who sat in the front row, turned to his

neighbour and ejaculated scornfully "A scradge pand!"

The thing jarred on me and I rose to depart. As I paused to light a cigarette at the top of the Hall-steps I became the spectator of an official rebuke. A thirteen-year-old boy, whose bright curls stuck out from underneath a weather-worn blue cap—he wore grey knickers and his stockings displayed "potatoes"—was standing there in front of a sour-looking rotundity, who was rating him for lack of business energy. It appeared that he had ceased to cry programmes once the music had begun, and for this sin of omission was to be fined sixpence. Partly because the cold glare of the electric light failed to outshine the defiance of his eyes, partly because the luxury of rebuking an official is dear to the British heart—wherefore politicians become Home Secretaries, if they can—I found a florin and put it in his hand as I passed downward. But as soon as I reached the last step there was a movement behind me, and that symbol of benevolence described a shimmering parabola over my head, and was lost in the black and sluggish water.

During the next few days I met him twice. Once I saw him tugging along a portly Gladstone bag so heavy that he had to lean right away from it, and holding his chin as high as it would go, and change hands every hundred yards or so. Remembering the aphorism that courtesy is the better part of charity—the learning of it had cost me two shillings—I merely nodded, but he was not disposed to forgive me as yet. Once again when the world went forth to pick up an appetite for the Sunday mid-day meal I received the "cut direct." Truth to tell no woman of the world could have done it so well; the firm round chin, childish inexorable lips, the cold fire of childish eyes, and the brilliant curls escaping from the tattered blue cap made me a picture-in-memory clear as a well-cut cameo. I turned round and looked after him perplexedly—to meet the child's eyes once more. Pride had died out his face, and I read there a pardon, which was almost a confession.

Next day an unwonted curiosity took me to the Southern end of the town, where was a stretch of muddy beach and a ramshackle jetty. Thereabouts was the original little fishing village, which had grown against its own good-will into "the favourite and healthy residential watering-place" of the cheap guide books. The fishermen had long since degenerated into longshoremen and those creatures of the basement, who draw water and hew wood for their lord and master the Cheap Tripper. Two seaworthy smacks lay under the sea-wall, and a number of wrecks—their bones cankered by the tides of an unearned prosperity—were an acceptable haunt for immature crabs. With his back against one of these ignoble derelicts stood my curly-haired friend (had he not confessed to be so much?) looking like a man with his mind made up. Two prentices of loafing were bobbing about in front of him seeking the opportunity to strike a decisive blow. The taller of the twain got in too close and had it in the eye, his companion-in-arms rushed in with head down and was picked up by a neat little upper-cut. In spite of the odds the issue seemed doubtful, until it became evident that a third combatant was to be reckoned with. A third had climbed into the skeleton boat, and stood there brandishing a broken oar. Before the solitary spectator could interfere the weapon fell, and the battle was over. The three stood irresolute, and then seeing me clamber down the sea-wall fled devious. A thread of crimson was woven into the flaxen hair, but two handfuls of salt water and my silk handkerchief restored the hero. He stood up erect, and so honoured me as to shake hands; I for my part refrained from smiling, and we parted with respect more or less mutual. In fact at our next meeting we conversed affably and by tacit consent the incident of the florin was forgotten. He was more useful than most acquaintance, would bring me my morning paper from the station, and he delighted in performing other free services after the manner of tame children. Of course I was not so ill-advised as to suggest payment.

One afternoon I suggested that we should take a walk, and my suggestion was favourably received. Two miles or less north of the town a great dome of rock rises sheer out of the sea a thousand feet. 'Tis the motive of all possible "bits" therabouts (to use the detestable phrase of the Artist, who chops up Nature to boil his pot) for many miles round. On clear open days it dominates the town, and in misty weather 'tis the ghost of a giant holding the sceptre of fascination over and above the sordid neatness of that favourite watering-place. And so we took our way northward.

For a mile we passed along crudded sand just out of reach of the gentle waves. The tide was at the turn. By and by we came upon shingle, and the shingle was followed by banks of pebbles gleaming-wet. "The low sun which makes the colour," shone across our pathway, and strewed it with gems, many-coloured, innumerable. Then appeared stones smooth and round as skulls, and fierce fragments of the living rock, among which were mirrors of clear water and nimble runnels departing seaward. At last we could go no further—for above us rose a great wall of granite thronged with gulls and "cormorants of the sea." We found a comfortable stone, and sat down.

Now I confess to mortality, and longed to cross-examine my companion as to his way of life. But he sat with his hands clasped on his knees looking out seaward, and I did not care to break his mood, but was content to watch the subtle changes of his face—getting thereby such a quiet pleasure as the musician knows when he reads some manuscript score of Mozart and the vision of a masterthought grows up out of silence. The child's eyes were crystal clear, and as often in the case of seafaring folk their colour changed or seemed to change with his thought—suggesting the stir of waters half-way towards the horizon or the limpid glow of the sky on a windy evening after rain. His eyes were as the Pool of Bethesda troubled by an angel—of Memory, his own or an heirloom.

Suddenly I was aware that I myself—or rather his conception of myself—had entered into his dream. Few grown up people can feel at their ease alone with a child, and there was that about this “thirteen” (as the school-board teacher would call such a creature) with his open face and proud eyes, which aroused and repressed curiosity. At last some fantastic folly reminded me that I had an unused paint-box and sketching-book in my lodgings. I asked him, if he would “run and get it” as I was anxious to sketch the sunset (amateurs rush in, etc.), and the readiness with which he ran off piqued me just a little. Accordingly I was left to spend an hour, as the prigs spend their lifetime, in the analysis of my motives. Firstly—I wished to justify the expenditure of certain monies. Secondly—I wished to impress my new friend with a show of versatility. Thirdly—I wanted to see if he would trudge three miles for my whim. Fourthly—a pest on the victim of introspection! I pulled out a newspaper and began to read. Why does the holiday Briton always carry a newspaper in his pocket? Why—the devil? Which latter question proved unanswerable, and I read as long as the light served.

Day was at an end, and the upper air was filled with the glories of an autumnal sunset. The sea had by now left bare a long tract of shining sand, in which the unearthly colours of the sky were reflected at my feet. Earth and sky were seen at one, and I stood between the Two Rainbows. At last the colours faded, and a faint glow of pink in the air and on the sands and against the grey granite behind me were all that was left of the untangled light of Day. Night fell—a starry silence. Overland the full moon rose. All at once I noticed that the child was standing at my side—empty-handed. The light was faint, and his eyes were too bright to be tearless. I laid my hand on his shoulder, and said—I forget what. He came closer at once, and laid a slender brown hand on my coat (of Scotch tweed, by the way), looked at me awhile, and then clasped me

round the neck. After a time his hands loosened, and he leaned against my shoulder breathing quietly and saying not a word.

E. B. OSBORN.

SUICIDE TRIOMPHANT.

JE suis le Dieu de suicide,
Mon corps est froid, mon cœur est vide.

Mon temple est un tombeau béant,
Ma 'providence' est le néant.

Venez, venez, gens misérables !
Les dieux établis sont des fables !

Je suis l'ami du réjété,
L'ami de toute infirmité.

Je donne la 'mort immortelle',
L'oblivion perpétuelle.

Venez ; le chemin est étroit,
Venez, venez, c'est votre droit.

Je suis le Dieu de suicide
Mon corps est froid, mon cœur est vide.

(Chansonnettes "Mandites.")

P. L. O.

A LEGEND OF THE ATLANTIC.

ON pinions white she sped
From a City of Prisons fled,
Where men are but guests of the dead.

By the Pillars Twain she passed.
The elarions of the blast
Called her into the lonely vast.

The urn of enchantress night
Dropped dew of a faint starlight;
The moon in her dome walked bright.

In the midnight, bells on the lee,
And fire in the open sea
Made darkness a mystery.


Till over the tomb of Spain
Blossomed the dawn again—
Purple and gold without stain.

As Leviathan's self might leap
From his chamber of sunless sleep
Sunward, the height of the deep.

A hand, gigantic and grey,
Loomed out of the white sea-spray
And clutched her out of the day.

E. B. OSBORN.

LINES SUGGESTED BY FRED. LESLIE'S DEATH.

HEN I am dead, cremate me ;
Please let my ashes lie
In mother earth's dear bosom ;
I have no fear to die.

Plant o'er my grave a rose tree ;
Its blossoms sweet and fair
Shall but remind thee, dear one,
That I lie sleeping there.

The sentient days are numbered,
And earth claims earth once more ;
The soul dispersed shall mingle
With loved ones gone before.

Yes, all must die ; repine not,
Death but returns us where
We came from in the silence ;—
And perfect rest is there.

QUEENSBERRY.

"GRAY AND GOLD."

THE Dean of St. Bride's College was an elderly man, in fact he was an old man, and when his turn came round to take the official deanship for about the tenth time in his career the other dons did not think he would accept it. Apart from the fact that the deanship brought a vast amount of trouble and worry and scarcely any increase in income, it seemed almost absurd that a man of his age and staid habits should place himself in a position, which would render him liable to be badgered by the boisterous undergraduate, and compel him to issue out of his rooms at late hours on cold nights, and quell disturbances, or to trample under his venerable feet the inevitable bonfire which experience had proved that every term brings forth. But he had accepted the deanship, and nobody could dispute his right to it, and accordingly the dons of St. Bride's College accepted the situation and thought no more about it. The Dean was sixty-three years old; he had a slim figure just a little bowed by his years, he was clean shaven, and though his hair was as white as snow, his blue eyes were as bright as a boy's; but he was rather tottering in his walk, and when his face was in repose the fire died out of it quickly and suddenly, and left him with that pitiable expression of collapse which comes over an old man's face when the fuel of animation and interest is not there to light it up. To-night as he sat in his room in an easy chair, with his head thrown back and the firelight just lighting up his pale face, he looked old and worn in the extreme, but even as it was an observer could have readily believed that in his youth he had been possessed of an extraordinarily beautiful face. Such indeed was the case, and a beautiful miniature of a young man with a delicate complexion, an oval face, and a curiously rapt and almost angelic expression, framed in a profusion of yellow hair, did no more than justice to the Dean's vanished youth. He had been a scholar of St. Bride's himself before he

became a fellow, and thus all his life had been spent in the atmosphere of calm beauty that surrounds an Oxford college; he had looked for forty years on the smooth green turf framed in its setting of carved stones and painted glass, and his life had inevitably become quiet and almost sleepy, his manner academic: yet he was too much a gentleman ever to become really donnish. As the Dean lay back in his chair in the firelight, there came a knock at the door; but the Dean was asleep and did not hear it; then the door opened and a boy in a cap and gown walked in. He paused when he saw the dozing Dean's pale face with its old worn look, he took off his cap and held it hanging down before him, and raised his other hand instinctively to his forehead as if to shade his eyes from the firelight, while at the same time he dropped into that attitude of natural grace which belongs only to a young man, the attitude of pause, with one heel raised from the ground and one knee slightly bent; there he stood, and something in the old man's face, something half grotesque and half pathetic, caught him half-way on the wings of motion and held him still. He had, a minute ago remembered his appointment with the Dean and had burst away from a crowd of noisy companions in a room filled with light, youth and cheerful faces, and shouting out that he would be back in a moment had rushed into the quad. and up the stone steps and so straight into the Dean's room. And then this scene of the dimly lit room, with one old man sleeping quietly, had struck with a sudden convincing force of perfect contrast on his senses which held him like the clutch of an unseen hand. He held his breath and looked, with parted lips, his cheeks flushed with running, and his hair gleaming like gold in the light of the fire, and the Dean woke suddenly with a start and saw his own youth looking down at him with a gentle pitying face. He had been dreaming, dreaming that he was a boy again with all his youth, and strength, and beauty, a boy who was going to do everything, who was to be a

poet, a philosopher, a golden letter on the scroll of time.—Then the Dean woke up and remembered that he was sixty-three, that his hair was gray, that he had written no poetry, and was only an old nonentity in an Oxford college, only one specimen of a never-ending type, and that the golden-haired boy before him was an undergraduate, who had come under his displeasure because he liked to keep his golden head on his white pillow in the morning, instead of bending it reverently in the dim light of the college chapel. The Dean sighed, and then got up and fumbled for a light while apologising for his sleeping state; and when the light was lit and the Dean had put on his official manner, and the boy had sat down on the extreme edge of a chair, and fumbled with his cap, and been unable to think of any excuse for not going to morning chapel, the Dean who for his dream's sake felt well-disposed to all boys, and golden-haired boys in particular, let him off with a mere rebuke and a kind word, and looked rather wistfully after him as he went out, being more than half-minded to call him back and ask him to stay and talk; but on second thoughts reflecting, with a rush of self-pity, that he was only an old don and that the boy would probably be bored with him, and would much rather go back to the other boys. And when the boy had gone the Dean picked up the miniature on the table and looked at it, and looked at his own face in the glass and sighed again. Then with an effort he pulled himself together, and bethought him that he had better go round and see young Brown the new fellow, who was always cheerful and had plenty to say for himself; it would cheer him up he thought, besides Brown was assisting in some theatricals that were being got up in the college, and there might be some rehearsing going on which would be amusing. So putting on his cap he went out into the warm summer air and crossing the quad. reached his destination. There was nobody in Brown's rooms; but the floor was littered with garments of all shapes and colours, wigs, swords, hats with feathers,

and other theatrical appurtenances, while two commoners gowns lying on one of the chairs showed that some of the undergraduates had been there. The Dean sat down and looked round at the confusion; then his eye fell on the make-up box lying on the table with a looking glass before it. He examined it curiously, and then went mad. He certainly must have been mad; what he did subsequently can hardly be explained, save on that hypothesis. First he shut the door, then he looked out of the window and, finding everything quiet, returned to the dressing-table, and proceeded to make himself up. He selected a wig from the heap on the table, a golden coloured one; he put it on and it fitted him exactly. He had evidently had experience of the art of making-up for theatricals, as he quickly and skilfully caused the lines of age on his face to disappear: a touch of black to his eyebrows, of red to his cheeks and lips, and he stood transformed into a young man. His figure was slight by nature, and the stoop of old age gave him, in his transfigured state, merely that loose and not ungraceful appearance of langour so often found in the young. Then he put on one of the commoner's gowns lying on the chair, and rested his college cap over the crisp gold curls of his wig, which completely concealed his scanty grey locks. When he had finished all this he looked in the glass, and beheld the reflection of a young man with small and delicate features, an oval face, bright blue eyes, and golden curls. The illusion was complete; the Dean smiled with joy, and then, turning away, cautiously opened the door and ran, yes, positively ran, down stairs. As he crossed the quad. the clock struck ten, and at the same moment somebody running with great violence, charged into him and nearly knocked him down. The figure stopped and apologised, and the Dean recognised his young culprit of half-an-hour ago. Evidently the boy had no suspicion of the real identity of the Dean, for he merely said "Oh, I'm awfully sorry," and then added "aren't you coming round to the rag?" "What rag?" said

the Dean ; “ Oh, we’re going to light a bonfire,” replied the boy, “ come on,” and he hurried off. The Dean followed; he realised in exultation that nobody would recognize him, he would be taken for an undergraduate of some other college, and for one short hour he would be young again and help to light a bonfire, and be irrational and happy. So he ran on and joined the throng. The bonfire was already lighted, a crowd of excited young men were rushing round it, shouts of laughter were heard on all sides, fireworks were let off, and noise reigned supreme. Into all this the Dean plunged, he tore up chairs and hurled the fragments into the fire, he let off rockets, he shouted and laughed, and was perfectly happy. Finally he became aware that the college authorities were out, he caught sight of the Vice-president looming in the distance, he saw the Junior Dean trampling on the edge of the bonfire, there was a general scurry and he fled to his own rooms. Once safely there he bolted the door, tore off the wig, and washed the paint from his face. Then he looked at the looking glass and saw his old face, and the reaction came after his brief fever of excitement and joy; he buried his face in his hands, and then his heart began to throb terribly and he turned sick and faint. He staggered to the door, opened it, and looked out, but there was nobody there. Half-an-hour afterwards the golden-haired boy, passing up the staircase to visit a friend, saw him lying dead in his own doorway. The doctors said the Dean died of heart disease, and the golden-haired boy went to his funeral.

ALFRED DOUGLAS.



SAD TRUE INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF A
CRITIC.

THIS is true. It was a most pathetic Creature. I was enjoying, in a placid way, the mystical absurdities of my favourite Swedenborg, that humourist: my fire, my candles, my curtains, the gleaming backs of my books, warmed my heart towards all the world: I assure you, towards all the world. I was luxurious in my sympathy with the entire universe: for not a man had come near me the whole long day. Two hours I will read Swedenborg, dear Swedenborg; one hour will I write upon the lyrical element in Lucretius, or upon some other theme of superior nonsense, such as my editor loves; one hour will I dream over the fire in a cultured melancholy: and then, to sleep, to pleasant sleep.

The knock at my door was tentative, nervous, shy. I thought it was my private youth of genius: the grave poet, who comes twice a week to say nothing for ten minutes, looking mysteries incommunicable, with prodigious passion of pain, and infinite love of sorrow. The quaintest-mannered youth of genius! so happy! and blessed with such looks of dreary doom! He cares nothing for Swedenborg: he has a way of going straight to my shelves, of taking down Molière, and of reading him with a face of three fates in one. Anticipating, then, this friend so welcome for his silence, I said, in suitably sad tones, "Come in!" Entered to me, cringing, bowing, mincing, propitiatory, deprecatory, insinuating; entered to me, I say, the Creature. Waving his horrid hat, and smiling detestably, he began to harangue me, me, mildly waiting in courteous wonder, with words of an oily profusion. "My name, sir, is Edwin Brown, and I beg you to pardon me this unwarrantable intrusion upon your valuable privacy, which I should not have done but for my admiration of your fine work, sir, in the *Lyceum Review*." Here a gruesome smile. "In my poor way, sir, I am a literary man, without academic advantages, like Charles Lamb, sir. Always loved the

arts and letters, and many's the shilling I've taken from my bread and butter for a book." At this point a hollow groan, meant, I imagine, for the rattling cough of a consumptive. "Ah, sir, it's we scholars, excusing the familiarity, who won't sell our souls for pelf. A hard time I've had, and little favour, but there, Chatterton had the same." It was becoming serious: the fellow, voluble and of a garrulous middle age, held the floor, and smiled, and smiled, and was a villain. "Won't you sit down?" He sat down, cosily and confidentially, clapped his dreadful hat, wildly Tyrolese, upon the open pages of Swedenborg; unbuttoned his coat, and lifted up an unctuous voice. "You'll be wondering, sir, what brings me here." Said I, severely, "Not at all." I knew, that money was the final, formal, material, and efficient cause of the visitation. "You're very good, sir. It's not many gentlemen who'd have the patience to hear an old man tell his story. But there, it's sympathy does it: both of the brotherhood, sir, servants of the muses, and the household of faith. 'Streets, where Otway starved before,' ain't it, sir? Now you're a fine scholar, I can see: up to Greek and Latin, and a touch of Hebrew, I'll be bound, or Sanskrit maybe. Great thing, sir, a regular education. Never was at Oxford College myself: London Town was my University: 'stony-hearted step-mother,' as De Quincey has it. Bless you, sir, it's the bookstalls made me a scholar: under the gas-lights of a winter's evening." He gave a shiver, like a horse with the staggers, to illustrate his ancient woes. "Bitter cold in winter, sir." "Yes," said his victim, "I've known it cold in winter." "Ah, cold it is, and cruel winds sometimes. Fog too, sir, damp right down your throat." I put some more coal on the fire. "Some whiskey?" I suggested: determining to sacrifice myself to the Creature, and make a grimly cheerful night of it. "Well, sir, if whiskey's the word, I'll not say no, just to keep you company. Failing of the brotherhood! Burns, sir, inspired exciseman, 'farewell to Mary,' and a wee drappie. Know the

Scotch language, sir? You've a look of the Scotchman about you, too, excusing me." Had the mere name of whiskey made the Creature drunk? "Might I be so bold as ask for hot water, sir, and a lump of sugar with a lemon on top of it? By your leave, I'll touch the bell. Symposias, nectar and ambrosia, the feast of reason and ——" "the flow of soul," I observed, mechanically, like one in a dull dream. "Like old times come back, sir, this is, if you'll credit me. I'd a friend or two upon a time, sir, down Battersea way, a printer one was and t'other an auctioneer. Many's the honest glass we've had together, and quoted Lord Byron, sir. Bit of a Don Juan too, sir, in my time." And the greasy reprobate leered at me, slapping his knee. "Another failing of the brotherhood, that, sir! *We know!*" It was intolerable, and I interrupted the Creature. "It's getting rather late. You came to me ——?" "And thank you for the hint, sir! But you'd forgive this unwarrantable intrusion upon your valuable privacy, sir, if you knew the pleasure it is to me to meet a gentleman and a scholar. And here's the materials, sir, piping hot, and I take the liberty of drinking your very good health and all prosperity. It's roses, sir, I take it, as the ancient Greeks and Romans would have put on their heads on similar occasions, and a skeleton in the cupboard. Nothing like the ancients now-a-days, sir! Why, there's Mr. Gladstone, now: its struck me, as he's what you may call cut out to wear a toga, sir, all over him in folds and trailing a bit on the ground. Interested in dress reform, sir? There's that hat of mine, now: if you'd be kind enough to reach it me ——." With alacrity I removed the Tyrolese horror from my Swedenborg. "A deal more shapely, sir, in my way of thinking, than the fashionable hat. But that's not here nor there. You were asking, sir, and very natural, I'm sure, what I've been bold to see you upon. It's my *magna opus*, sir. I'm a humbler journalist than you, sir, and the likes of you: Fleet Street hack, sir, and not much of that.

I've queried sometimes, if you'll believe me, whether it's literature at all. There's style, sir, in a smart paragraph, not a doubt of it: and a bit of fancy now and then. 'A touch of nature makes the whole——' " "world kin," from the depths of my dejection. "But I've kept the sacred fire alight, sir, at home, in my scrap of a lodging. Books is the best part of my furniture, sir: my purse wont run to high art decoration like this of yours here. A shelf of books, sir, and a table and chair. Well now, there's a lot of books, sir, that's published under the name of Bohn, as you've heard of, I make no doubt. Miscellaneous reading he publishes, to be sure, and pretty cheap on stalls. Now there's a volume or so, I picked up in the Borough, ah! a matter of six years ago, translations from the ancient Greek, sir: sort of plays they are, by an author, name of Euripides, if you'll excuse the right pronunciation. Well, sir, I read those plays straight through, and blessed queer style they were. Not natural, said I: not what you call natural. But there's beauty in the things, if a man could come at it; fine morality, sir, and a neat way of argument, and lots of pretty pictures. I've seen bits in Surrey, sir, with fine trees in 'em and a winding stream below, and that's ancient Greece to my conception of it: kind of what the company in those plays describe, where the're talking a trifle at random, wandering, as I may say. Well, sir, I sat of a night and read them in that translation of Mr. Bohn's, till I thought, here's good stuff, I thought, only wants a touch of style to make it real fine. I'll turn it into blank verse, said I, and get a scholar to overhaul it. And, as I'm sitting here, sir, I've done it, and here it is, and you're the scholar, as I want to overhaul it!" The Creature had explained: and it was *not* money: it was unendurably worse.

Silence. I gazed upon the glowing Creature, whose poetic rapture has thrown a ruddy flush over his unwholesome face; he lay back with the air of a conqueror. Suddenly he rose, and dived both hands into

his coat tail pockets. With considerable exertion, he lugged forth a vast roll of manuscript, from other pockets he produced other rolls, he piled them together, flattened them with a proud caressing hand, and lumped them down upon Swedenborg. I temporized. "My dear sir," in a tone of unfeigned cordiality, "may I ask what induced you to come to me in particular?" "Here's the truth of it, sir. I know well enough I'm no scholar, though I like to think I am; but no classics, sir, no scholarship! Sound doctrine, that? So I said to myself, 'It's a scholar I want to overhaul my work, and I don't know one. It's a literary paper where the real scholar's write, a high literary paper to help me out.' So I go on a Saturday morning, and I buy *The Lyceum*. I see your name, sir, at the tail of the first article I chanced upon. 'Take it as an omen,' said I, 'and go to him!' I hunted up your name in the directory, and here I am, and here's my poetry; and I make bold to ask you, sir, to put it fair and square, scholarly, so to call it. I'm a poor man, sir, and I can't make it worth your while so far as pecuniary profit goes, but your name will appear, sir, in my book. And now I'll trust the manuscript to you, sir, and take my leave." He finished his third whiskey, and lurched to his feet; he had nerved himself to the interview by many previous drinks. The situation was impossible. I ran a hurried eye over the sprawling pages, and choked with internal laughter at sight of the most delicious absurdities; then a splendid and kindly lie occurred to me. There was a grotesque pitifulness about the Creature which forbade me to give him an abrupt refusal, so I lied to him. "I congratulate you, Mr. Brown, upon the completion of your work, but I must decline the honour of revising it. By a singular coincidence, I am myself engaged upon a translation of Euripides in verse, and I could hardly examine your version while I am busy with my own. I might unconsciously borrow your ideas, and plagiarise. But I will give you a letter of introduction to a friend of mine, a better scholar than I could ever be, with more leisure, and not employed

upon Euripides. I am sure he will do all he can for you." I wrote him a note for my silent poet, who has the kindest of hearts, and would certainly give the poor Creature his death blow in the gentlest manner. For a second or so he looked dejected; but his face brightened up, and he exclaimed, "I see it, sir, point of honour among the brotherhood. I admire your delicacy, sir, and I wish you good-night, thanking you for your kind hospitality." He gathered up his manuscript, disposed it about his person, assumed the hat of Tyrol, and with many unsteady bows made for the door. I guided his wandering steps down stairs, wished him good luck in the hall, and watched him as he swung off into the night. His true name—need I say it?—was *not* Edwin Brown. The Creature deserves so much at my hands; he was amusing and rather saddening; and I keep back his name.

But, shade of Plato! surely mine was a generous and noble lie? My conscience is clear; even though my silent poet should wear hereafter a darker face of woe.

LIONEL JOHNSON.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Veau-Marin.—A letter for you requiring an answer has been sent to the Union.

P.L.O..—Of your two French poems, one as you may see appears in this number: the other is quite charming, and if ever I feel an inclination to make a short sojourn in one of Her Majesty's jails I shall seize the opportunity of printing it.

Exoniensis.—Not suitable.

J.A.C..—Your poem is quite unintelligible, the greatest intellects of modern times have failed to extract a meaning from it; will you explain it? or write another?



The Spirit Lamp.

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TO LEANDER.

(In sunset by the Southern Sea.)

FROM what diviner air hast thou
Descended to these sombre skies ;
What mighty god enwreathed thy brow
With flaky flame, and filled thine eyes,
Those wells deep-set, with light too clear,
Too ardent, for our mortal sphere ?

Motionless, like a heaven-born thing,
Which earthly vapours overwhelm,
Still striving with the spirit's wing
To reach thy antenatal realm,
Thou standest on this craggy cove,
Live image of Uranian Love.

The liquid waters dream at ease
Around thy billow-beaten throne ;
Pearly horizons of grey seas
Melt into skies of amber tone,
With rose incarnadined to warm
The flawless pallor of thy form.

'Tis gold, 'tis honey, faintest flush
Of crimson playing round each limb,
Bathing thy body in a blush
So all-pervasive, lustrous, dim,
That gazing we are fain to feel
Those hues from thee their radiance steal.

Why prate of gods and heaven-born things ?
Be thou thyself, victorious boy !
There need no wide aerial wings,
No immortalities of joy.
Thine is the true, the sole ideal :
Man knows nought lovelier than the real.

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

ALARGE number of critics are continually telling us that the plays of Shakspeare are for the study and not for the stage.

To some extent we are inclined to agree with them ; for though many of Shakspeare's works do indubitably give finer opportunities to an actor of displaying his genius than do those of any other writer, yet no less indubitably do most of them lose half their charm and illusion when transferred from the library to the theatre. Certainly Mr. Lang and his partizans might look far and find no such striking support for their arguments as the play chosen by the O. U. D. S. for production this year.

Of course it is well known that the choice of the O. U. D. S. is limited ; only a Greek play or one of the Shakspearian dramas may be produced. A foolish restriction, doubtless ! There are so many masterpieces which possess all the charms of novelty. Marlowe's "Dr. Faustus" or "Edward II." would both be most effective stage plays ; but, indeed, there are other Elizabethan dramas which none have seen acted and few perhaps even read.

But, in spite of restrictions, we think many a wiser choice might have been made than "The Two Gentlemen of Verona."

We cannot help wondering when we consider the enormous success of "The Frogs" last year, that another comedy of Aristophanes was not produced ; or if variety were needed, one of the tragedies of Æschylus or Sophocles.

Of all performances given by Oxford amateurs, the "Alcestis" and "The Frogs" secured the greatest successes. The representation of "King John" was so lamentably bad that the O. U. D. S. has shewn decided courage in attempting another of Shakspeare's plays so soon.

The fact is, that the works of England's greatest genius are far too difficult for amateurs to give an efficient render-

ing of them. Where professionals frequently fail, it can hardly be expected that undergraduates will succeed. Even in the elaborate revivals at the Lyceum there are certain defects which must jar upon any one endowed with artistic taste, and in an amateur performance these crudities are amplified and exaggerated until the whole effect is often so ludicrous that it is more provocative of tears than laughter.

It would be absurd then, taking into account as we must, the enormous difficulties which any work of Shakspeare's presents even to actors exceeding intelligent and skilled, to criticise this performance in a harsh or intolerant spirit. The players must be praised or found wanting solely by the standard of other amateurs. Faults must be expected, and as far as possible, condoned.

"The Two Gentlemen of Verona" cannot be called a very interesting comedy, and it is certainly much more charming to read it than to see it acted. When reading it we are so captivated by the delicate fancies and dainty conceits of the poetry, that we do not notice how the action hangs fire, or how slight the plot is. But on the stage all is changed; we have no time, when we see the comedy played, to linger lovingly on word or phrase of surpassing beauty; it is with the story and action of the play we are now concerned, and "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" does not possess enough of either to preserve us from boredom.

Unfortunately the piece was not sufficiently well played to give it an interest which it did not really possess. There was a langour and lack of verve about the performance; at times it dragged painfully. The actors did not play well together and even upon the second night several of them were still not word-perfect.

The chief success of the evening was gained by Mr. Ponsonby as "Launce"; he is decidedly the best amateur Oxford has produced for a long time. The part of "Launce" is a difficult one, but it was played throughout with admirable discretion and humour;

especially clever was the scene with the shoes in the second act. His other scenes would have been more successful if he had been more ably seconded by "Speed."

Of the "two gentlemen" Mr. Whitaker as "Valentine" looked his part to perfection and spoke his lines beautifully. The subtle and difficult character of "Proteus" received unfortunately but indifferent treatment at the hands of its interpreter, whose gestures were decidedly awkward and ineffective, and whose elocution was monotonous in the extreme.

Of the ladies we need only mention Mrs. Charles Sim, who acted sympathetically as "Julia" especially in the scenes where she is disguised as a page; though perhaps to make "Julia's" masquerade seem at all probable the part should be taken by a young lad of comely appearance and voice as yet unharshened by approaching manhood.

The minor characters were most of them played in a manner only to be called mediocre, though exception should be made in the case of Mr. Booker who as the "Duke of Milan" enunciated clearly and moved about the stage in an easy way not too common with amateurs. The piece was well mounted and some of the dresses almost sumptuous, especially the robe of pale amber hue worn by "Sylvia."

This performance at least serves one purpose—to show clearly and once for all that Shakspeare is not for amateurs. The truth of this statement all who have seen the "Two Gentlemen of Verona" this week must acknowledge, however biassed they may be.

When Oxford becomes less conservative perhaps the O. U. D. S. will be allowed to perform pieces which do not lay so heavy a tax upon the players. Certainly the result would be more pleasing, although the effort might be less ambitious.

STANLEY ADDLESHAW.

LE MODERNE.

CE que j'aime le mieux, c'est le troisième sexe ;
Après, la femme mûre, et la fange, et le fard,
Et les charmants propos chrestomathiques d'art,
Et les macabres nurits dont le haschisch nous vexe.

Je hais le duel, et les encolures d'athlète ;
Je fuis les teints voyants—je fuis le patchouli ;
Je déteste Schubert, Massenet et Verdi ;
Les gens savants me vont ainsi qu'un mal de tête.

J'adore les pastels ... puis, en fait de nature,
La pénombre me plaît : du soleil, c'est grossier ...
Que le champagne ennuie ou ne saurait nier :
On ne saurait nier non plus que rien ne dure.

J'aime en mars le Japon, en juillet la Hongrie ;
J'aimais Whistler—c'est du faux goût depuis deux mois.
Aujourd'hui j'aime Huysmans, comme Sade autrefois.—
J'aime ... ne pas mourir—et j'exècre la vie !

VEAU-MARIN.

TOUT VIENT À QUI SAIT ATTENDRE.

FEW people perhaps have ever regarded the life of a waiter, as a life capable of romance or beauty ; to the ordinary man or woman, on the contrary, the occupation of waiting at dinner, of placing knives and forks, of taking orders, of pouring out wine, or of performing the thousand and one menial duties which are the lot of the waiter, has probably appeared a mean and sordid occupation ; an occupation tending rather to dwarf or even subdue altogether, the romantic, intellectual, or beautiful side of the nature. Instances are not wanting, and indeed are numerous, of the introduction of waiters to the arena of fiction ; they have been made the subject of sketches, they have appeared on the stage, they have even figured in poetry ; but at all times they have been regarded as legitimate exponents of low comedy, or at most of humorous eccentricity ; and the subtle fascination of a waiter's life have so far, apparently, escaped the notice of the novelist, the playwright, and the essayist. Of course there is one point of view, a very obvious one, from which a waiter appears in a vulgar or humorous light ; he drops plates on the stage, he drops h's in *Punch*, he is upraided by angry old gentlemen, he flirts with chamber-maids, he extorts outrageous tips from innocent customers, and altogether behaves in a very commonplace and sometimes offensive way. The true waiter does none of these things ; but then the true waiter is rare and—he he is not English ! No Englishman will ever make a true waiter (the Prince of Wales's famous motto notwithstanding) ; the lioness may consort with the ox, the dove may become a ranger from its love, but the Englishman cannot be a waiter. Of course it is obvious that an Englishman may put on a black swallow-tail coat, an evening waistcoat and a white tie, he may tie a long apron round his waist, he may attend at dinner, he may remove dirty plates and replace them with new ones, but he is a sham, the essence of waiting is not there ; he is either too proud or too stupid to drink in

the true spirit of waiting, he is sure to err either on the side of insolence and indifference, or over humility and nervousness, he cannot attain the perfect *manner* of the real waiter ; he may assure you that the soup is of excellent quality but he will not convince you, he may promise you a good dinner but you will not believe him till you have tasted it ; and, above all, he cannot speak French ! Better a dinner of herbs with French, than roast beef where English is spoke. It is not necessary that a waiter should be a Frenchman, he may be Italian, German, or Pole, but he must *speak* French, and if ever he does speak English, it must be with a broken accent. I do not mean to contend that every foreign waiter is a perfect one, by no means ; but unless he is foreign he cannot be perfect. I have, alas ! known foreign waiters who have become so contaminated by the influence of their English brethren, or so demoralized by the badness of the dinners that they have become as inattentive as rude and as commonplace as the very worst of English waiters. The fact is that a good waiter, like everything else that is rare and precious, requires a congenial atmosphere in which to thrive, and, deprived of that atmosphere, he will languish and die like some costly exotic which has been removed from the sheltering warmth of its glass palace into the cold regions of the outer air.

There are certain conditions without which a good waiter cannot exist, among these perhaps the two most important may be mentioned as, first, *a good cook* ; this will give him confidence ; it is useless to expect a good waiter to thrive if he is not supported by good cooking ; he may be a paragon, he may possess all the virtues of perfect waiting, he may speak in a low fascinating voice, he may shape with graceful gestures of his hands each dish as he names it to the expectant guest, he may place the dishes on the table and remove the covers with the most perfect grace and loving care, he may speak in short and hurried whispers to his subordinates, giving that impression of mystery and expectation which

is so much to be desired in a dinner, he may even tell you, in response to your query, that his name is François or Giacomo (not 'enery, Sir, or Robert), but if the dinner is bad, poor man, what can he do? what he *can* do he will, and you may be sure that your dinner will be more pleasant than it would have been but for his efforts, but it cannot but be painful and distressing both to him and to yourself to think of what might have been if the dinner had only been as good as the waiting. It is indeed a tragic thing to order a dinner which has all the sound and appearance (on paper) of being a good one, and then after all to have to fall back on the waiter. But Heaven help the man who in this dire plight finds that he leans upon a broken reed. Then indeed he will know the true bitterness of life, then he will know what it is to be told that several other gentlemen have had the same dinner and have found it excellent; or worse still, his remonstrances will be greeted with an extremely respectful, but wholly indifferent, "Yes, Sir."

Another condition necessary to a good waiter, perhaps the most important of all, is *appreciation*. Nothing will more quickly destroy the finer spirit of waiting than a continued course of indifference on the part of customers to the little refinements and subtleties of good waiting; and we may here lay it down as an axiom that a man who omits to enquire the nationality of a good waiter, or at least to ascertain his name, is a philistine, and is liable to do a great deal of harm. Perhaps we ought to qualify this by saying that no one should ever omit to enquire the name of a waiter if there is good ground for supposing that he is French or Italian, especially the latter, but if there is any reason to suppose that a waiter is German, it is better that no such enquiry should be made, the result might be fatal to whatever romance had gathered round him; German names are as a rule hideous, while French and Italian names are invariably beautiful; and in addition to this it is well that a German waiter's nationality should be

kept as much as possible in the background, for German waiters occasionally become obtrusively patriotic, and some have been even known to speak German quite suddenly, which of course is absolutely fatal to a good dinner.

Having now mentioned the two most important conditions for a good waiter, to wit, a *good cook* and *appreciation*, let me go on to consider what temperament should distinguish him; and let me say at once that I have no hesitation in premising that the great leading quality which marks a good waiter and without which he cannot possibly attain to perfection, is *intense sympathy*.

This is the keystone to the good waiter's character, his sympathy is more than human, it is divine; he will sympathize intensely with a man who cannot bear some particular flavour in a dish, he will be so grieved that the insidious poison should have crept into it that the sight of his grief will cause the angry guest to forget his own grievance, and regret that he had ever mentioned it; all this he will do. But this is human. But now mark what he must do besides; he must have a sympathy equally sincere and equally heartfelt for the gentleman who, by some unlucky chance, has been deprived of that very flavour whose presence causes such distress to his neighbour: and thus the waiter's sympathy must be so large, so vast, and so comprehensive as to cover these two directly opposite cases; and this I contend is Divine. Another distinctive feature of the good waiter is the readiness with which he catches at and almost anticipates the wishes of his guests; to order a dinner from a good waiter is an education in itself; a man need but throw out the vaguest of hints as to the sort of thing he desires, and he is ready with a dozen suggestions; he guesses instinctively what sort of eater his guest is, whether he is an unsophisticated novice who can be dazzled by one brilliant dish, or a trained and fastidious gourmet who will appreciate rather a quiet steady high level of cooking; he will even sacrifice his

own feelings and consent to the roast beef and mutton or cutlets of the truly British customer. It is not necessary that a waiter should be beautiful, but if he is beautiful he should be told so.

There is another kind of waiter who, though perhaps his lines are not cast in such brilliant surroundings as the waiter in a restaurant, yet sees much of the wonderful things of life, and is by no means unendowed with the spirit of the higher philosophy of waiting: I refer to the café waiter. Of course the real café is rare in England, and I am at present taking cognizance only of waiters who practise their calling in England, which practically means London, for, outside London, the true philosophy of waiting is almost entirely unknown. The real café, I say, is rare in London, though there are many places which partake of the nature of a café; but, here and there, there are a few of these genuine ones to be found, and here the waiter flourishes and has many opportunities. In these places we may see him less smartly dressed perhaps, less scrupulously shinning in shirt front and apron, but yet showing in all his expressions and actions that the spirit of waiting is as strong within him as in the case of his more fortunate brother of the restaurant. Hither resort the Bohemians of London, uncouth and marvellous looking; many Frenchmen and other foreigners with long and unkempt hair; shabbily attired, but often with that indefinable stamp that marks the man of genius or talent. Some of them are real poets who have added to their poems the record of their own unruly passions and reckless lives; they walk into such a café and at once seek out their own especial seat which they have occupied so often that it becomes associated with them and seems to belong to them; and then their own particular waiter comes forward with his smile of greeting and his bow and his "Bonjour M'sieu;" for the waiters, not the seats, are the attraction which brings them to the same corner day after day and year after year. One seat is much the same as an other, but each little corner or

row is haunted by some particular waiter who knows all his regular customers and understands their habits and their wants. If our Bohemian is a writer, as so many of them are, you may be sure his waiter has read his books; or seen his pictures if he is an artist, and is a very intelligent critic besides. Once he has reached his special seat our Bohemian will sit sometimes for hours, reading the papers, drinking his absinthe and smoking countless cigarettes. This monopoly on the part of particular waiters to particular men is recognised by all the other waiters, and should our friend's own particular waiter chance to be away, he is sure to be informed that "*Bismark est en vacances*," or that "*Isidore est parti depuis deux heures*," or some such information of a similar nature. Then a pale handsome young man, very well dressed and with a flower in his coat, will walk in and be greeted in like fashion by *his* waiter; he will probably order absinthe although he does not like it, and smoke a great many more cigarettes than are good for him, for he too is a poet; and our young poets now-a-days do not starve in garrets by themselves, but do their starving like gentlemen, living well on credit and dressing smartly, which, if less romantic, is certainly more pleasant and more becoming to them than the old fashioned way. To these boys the waiters are very kind and sometimes even fatherly, they discourage their absinthe-drinking and cigarette-smoking tendencies, and look wistfully after them as they go out. Of the waiter's private life nothing is known, and those who would seek to pry into it must do so at their peril. Whether when he has shuffled off his official garb he becomes as other men of his class are, or whether there still clings to him the mysterious glamour of a subtle fascination I am unable positively to state. The idea of a waiter "*en vacances*," clad perhaps in a tweed suit and a straw hat, is so monstrous that it is impossible to conceive it without a shudder. Can it be possible that the man who has so often charmed us with his perfect tact and graceful manners, the man who has heard the

words that fall from the unguarded lips of genius at the feast, who has drunk in the philosophy of pleasure poured out from the golden cup of youth, can it be that this man becomes an ordinary member of the lower middle classes? Can he whose lightest suggestion on the quality of a vintage is gospel, whose manner of removing a dish cover is a thing to envy and admire at a distance, can *he* ever quarrel with his wife, or have difficulties about his rent? Perish the thought. Even if it is true I prefer not to believe it, the waiter is an artist, and an artist does nothing ignoble or vulgar. If, when he is attired in mufti, he does anything that is not absolutely charming, he is not the same man, and is not to be considered as the same man, any more than the ugly grub with its crawling habits and Christian qualities of humility and insignificance, is to be considered as the same creature as the beautiful butterfly, with its paint and pride, and wicked ways of roving and sipping from every flower. Again, do waiters ever eat and drink? I have come to the conclusion that they do not. Anyone who has seen the pride and joy with which a real waiter regards a beautiful dish when he has set it on the table could no more suspect him of eating it than he could accuse him of eating his own children; such a thing is impossible. I am aware that sham waiters eat and drink; they gorge! nothing escapes them, they eat of every dish as it goes out, they drink the wine behind screens, their children grow fat on the food they bring home in their pockets, but the real waiter does not eat or drink: no one has ever seen him do so, and the moment he did eat or drink he would cease to be a real waiter. How, then, it may be asked, do waiters live? I do not know or care, I do not seek to explain waiters, anything that is explained becomes tedious, I do not understand waiters, I accept them as beautiful facts. Perhaps, when they have left their restaurants and gone home to their families, or when they are "en vacances" they eat and drink; but, as I have already explained, they

are not then the same people, and what they do does not concern the question of waiters, but falls more suitably under some such head as "the housing of the middle classes," or "how the poor live." I do not uphold that waiters do not eat or drink, because I think it vulgar to eat or drink, certainly not. Eating and drinking can be and are made refined and beautiful, and it is not on that account that I have come to this conclusion about waiters, but it is simply a fact I have arrived at by personal observation that they do not eat and drink, besides if they did who would wait upon them? for obviously they cannot wait upon themselves.

But enough of this subject. Let us leave the region of fruitless speculation, and return to the contemplation of the life of the real waiter as he is in his glory and at his best in the very best restaurants at night. What a life it is! How strange! how exciting! He stands at the beck of pleasure, he bears the cup of luxury; he sees the joy, the madness, the festal hours of life, he catches the words born of imprudence and the red wine in the wine cup, he sees the pageant of life and its comedies, the actors move before him while he watches impassive and silent, they feast and laugh, the lips of pleasure are joined with the lips of youth, sin in a golden dress sits down to feast with innocence while he looks on—and presently tragedy creeps in, but the waiter does not often see the end. And then how splendidly every one comes out before him, how the merry ones laugh, how the wits talk, and how beautiful are some of the faces he sees, and how delightfully reckless they all are. What things they say! what monstrous and improbable things! what friendships are sworn! what words are whispered! ah, if the waiter only repeated everything that he heard, how many people would be astonished? and how many more would be scandalized? but he hears it all, he is in the confidence of everybody and he never betrays their confidence.

Who but the waiter knows how lightly Lord — the great politician talks of the affairs of the nation

to his friend Mr. Dot, who advocates temperance for the working classes and drinks such a lot of champagne at dinner ?

And what would not the Charles Greville of the future give to be standing in the shoes of our waiter behind the chair of ——— the brilliant poet and dramatist, who is saying such curious things to the young man with a flushed face and very bright eyes who is dining with him ?

Or who but our waiter knows the exact reason why Lady This left Lord This and went off with young Mr. That, as all the world knows she did, and quite properly too thinks our waiter now that he has heard what Mr. So-and-so has been saying confidentially to one of his guests.

Yes, everyone is happy and charming, and at their best, and the waiter gets the benefit of it all.

Of course it will readily be seen that the waiter who has all these advantages is not often to be met with, there are perhaps half-a-dozen places in London where such a scene as I have alluded to could be viewed, and it is only at such places as those that a real waiter can be found, except at a few little out of the way restaurants where the Bohemians do congregate at nights, and create the demand which must be met with a supply. For the secret of the paucity of good waiters is very easily explainable by the laws of supply and demand ; wherever extravagance, luxury, brilliance, wit, humour, beauty, good-fellowship, and a fastidious palate meet together and demand a restaurant, there will the good waiters consort to attend them ; and wherever respectability, dullness, religion, ugliness and a taste for roast beef are combined in a demand for an eating-house, there will the bad waiters be gathered together ; and their name is legion.

ALFRED DOUGLAS.

SONNETS.

HEARTSEASE AND ORCHID.

HEARTSEASE it was from his dear hand I took,
A dainty flower that loves the garden air,
Breathing the freshness of his boyhood fair.
So it was treasured in a golden book.

There came another with a far-off look,
His hand an orchid gave ; 'twas strange and rare,
And caught my senses in a beauteous snare,
Till sunlight for the furnace I forsook.

My heart grew drowsy with a sweet disease ;
And fluttered in a cage of fantasy ;
And I remembered how his face was pale,
Yet by its very paleness more did please ;
Now hath the orchid grown a part of me,
But still the heartsease tells its olden tale.

Dec. 1892.

HYLAS.

THIS ever is my fear, lest love-beguiled
Some nymph should steal the Hylas whom I love,
And I should seek him thro' the woodland wild,
And all in vain the wanton theft reprove ;
When I have seen him in the glassy stream
Bend on the image of his countenance,
And e'en as one, led captive by a dream,
Watch languidly the ripples in their dance,
Then have I caught him back, as tho' me-thought
Some nymph should woo him in his own despite,
For they but err, who deem the legends nought,
Of Hylas stolen by the watersprite ;
And how a brook betrayed the young Narcisse,
Whose very beauty kept him poor in bliss.*

* V, 14 of Ovid, in which Narcissus says " Inopem me copia fecit."

CORYDON.

Now Corydon is gone, the Loves lament,
And with the Loves lament a troop of boys,
For cruel laws have slain Love's sweet content,
And cruel men have mocked at gentle joys.
The Rose is sighing in the garden-close,
While Morning weeps her pearly tears of dew ;
But a white rosebud comforteth the rose,
" Love will return, and Joy his reign renew."—
Shall love return ? Nay love hath never gone ;
Love lives, tho' he be reft of all that's dear.
Weep, weep, Alexis for thy Corydon,
But love him more, because he is not here ;
What day hath ta'en, night shall give back to thee,
And dreams tell o'er thy lost felicity.

May, 1892.

P. L. O.



LOVE OR POWER.

MRS. CODDRINGTON was sitting alone in her drawing room. The children had gone to bed, and it was getting late. It was a good many years now since Emma Lawson had married John Coddrington. He had been, or had been supposed to be, a promising barrister at that time. A few briefs had found their way to him soon after he had been called, and an uncle's influence had helped him into political circles, where he had played the smallest of small parts in that drama. But as time went on he had gradually dropped out of the routine of political hackwork, and, though in its place had come an increase of work more proper to his profession, he was not a man overburdened with briefs or greatly sought after. And why should he have been? He had work enough to occupy him, and money enough to keep him and his family in comfort. Accordingly John Coddrington was a happy and contented man. But this was not the case with his wife. Merry and haughty as she had always been as a girl, to those who knew her, her marriage with sober minded John Coddrington had always been a mystery. Yet the first years of her married life had not changed her disposition. Latterly, however, a change could have been remarked. Her family were growing older, and the number was increasing, and this meant an increase in her cares and anxieties. Gradually and silently one might have noticed a spirit of gloom creeping over her. Though still to the world she offered a front of boldness as of old, it needed no keen eye to see that she was a woman sad, and weary, perhaps. Sitting this night in her drawing room, with her work laid aside, she looked almost an invalid, tired and faint.

The door opened and her husband entered, and passed over to the fireplace.

"My dear," he began, "You look very tired again to-night. I think you ought really to go away for a change."

"Oh, no! that will do no good," said the woman with a sigh. She picked up her work, and began again. In a few minutes she remarked, "Have you already finished your work, John."

"Oh, yes!" he said, "I never have much, and to-night less than usual."

"I do wish you could get more work," said his wife in a voice fervent and husky.

"How good of you!" replied her husband, fondly sitting on the arm of his wife's chair; "In some ways I should like to have more work," he continued with a sigh, "but still one cannot expect too much. Many men of my standing would gladly have the work I have, and after all I am but an ordinary man."

Half groan, half sob, seemed to escape his wife, but it was barely noticeable.

There was a pause for a few moments.

John Coddington gazed at his wife and rose.

"Emma, I don't like to see you so sad. Why is it? Year by year I've noticed you getting more and more melancholy. Do tell me, Emma. Do tell your husband."

The woman did not answer, but large tears filled her eyes. At last she spoke.

"John, I am sad, and have been sad for long. You are quite right. I want, John, to see you get more work; I want to see you sought after; I want to see you loaded with briefs. That is why I am sad."

Her husband paced up and down, then turned:

"You are a dear, good girl, Emma. You always think so much of me, and wish me to get on. But you shouldn't fret. Do let us be content with what we have got. Why? Tell me why, my dear," he said, putting his arm fondly round her, and kissing her, "Why do you want me to get on?"

The woman gave to his embrace, then breaking away with tears standing in her eyes:

"I want to see my husband a great man, I want to be the wife of a great man. I want to be the mistress

of a large house, to have carriages and horses, to have large parties, to have my house thronged with people, and to know that all this is won by my husband."

John Coddington looked wistfully at his wife, and kissed her.

"I wish, Emma, I could gratify your ambition, but I cannot." And then with a smile, "You must remember, Emma, I am but an average man. If you had wanted all these things you should have married a genius. And yet, after all, we have much to be thankful for. I daresay before long I may get some appointment, a magistracy, a recordership; that is all I can expect. Don't grieve, dear, let us take what is granted unto us and be thankful."

Next morning Mrs. Coddington left the breakfast room and came into the drawing room. This was her daily practice. But on this morning her daily routine was not carried out; for after laying a handful of letters on her desk, she sank back on to the sofa, still keeping one letter in her hand. She picked it up:

"DEAR SIS,—Just a hurried line. I have only this moment returned from dining with Lady Walston, where I met our old friend, Sir William Greenfield. You know, I presume, he is going to stay in this country and go into Parliament. He spoke very kindly of you, asked after you, and told me he would call at once. This only to forewarn you. Excuse haste, and believe me—Your affectionate brother—HARRY LAWSON."

"Fancy Willie Greenfield now Sir William! My brother's schoolfellow and playmate! To think of poor Willie, whom we all knew so well, going to Australia, making a fortune, coming back here as leader of a delegation, getting knighted, invited to join the Conservative party. How funny! How well I remember the day he tumbled into the duck pond! And how good he is not to forget us; but he always was very nice."

And then with a genuine sweet smile she sat down at her desk and began her correspondence.

A ring at the door bell roused her. Good gracious, she thought, not a caller at this hour!

The drawing room door opened, and Sir William Greenfield was announced. An iron grey wizened man entered, aged beyond his years, but his step was firm and his eye still warm.

"Mrs. Coddington," he began, moving towards her, "you remember Willie Greenfield, I hope. I have not yet forgotten Emma Lawson."

The woman welcomed her old friend warmly. For a few minutes they bandied mutual civilities and mutual compliments.

"I cannot stop long," he said, at length, "I am so dreadfully busy; but meeting last night my old friend, your brother, I heard all about you. I've been here in old England such a short time, and there's been so much to do, that it has been like a dream, but I had always wanted to see you, Emma. I may call you Emma, I hope, in memory of the time that is gone?"

"Oh! do, Willie, do"

"Ah!" he said, "how all has changed! Emma," he continued, "you never knew it, but I must tell you. I loved you in days gone by, and yes, I hoped to make you my wife, but that could not be. However, I love you still, and I want to be your brother, I want to help you, to help your husband, your children. You know, after all, I have not many interests here; there's politics and all that, but that is nothing. What I want is to comfort you; may I?"

Emma Coddington's heart was too full for words.

"Yes, I can help you. I'll get your husband on, I'll assist your children, I'll do all for you, Emma. I must go off now, you'll come and see me and we'll talk it all over when I am not quite so busy. But remember I am your brother, Emma."

He rose and left the room.

Was it all a dream? or reality? She sat immovable. A sweet smile played on her face. Then a cloud passed over it. A storm came up, and she burst into tears.

Suddenly the door opened, and a man hurriedly entered. Emma Coddington quickly pulled herself together.

"Oh! Sis," said the new comer, "I saw old Willie Greenfield driving away from your door. I presumed he had called, and hurried in to see you."

The woman made no answer.

"Why, Sis, you've been crying! What's up?"

"You come and ask me!" hissed the woman. "Why, pray, does he come and flaunt his success in my face? Why does he come and torture me and insult me? He asks me to be his sister, to assist my husband, my children—" and a wild flood of tears came and ended her words.

Harry Lawson stood unmoved.

"Emma," he said, firmly, "dry your tears and listen to me. I know you and I know your troubles, and I will tell you all about them. But first you must withdraw those foul thoughts about Willie Greenfield. He is a fine and noble fellow and always has been, and it is only out of the goodness of his heart that he has spoken to you this day. This pain you now feel, is all your own doing. You have only just now become aware of what I have known for long, that you might have been Willie Greenfield's wife. You, like all your sex, love power, and in days gone by you made your choice, and took John Coddington. You thought he was a great man, and passed by poor Willie. And for this error of judgment you have now to pay. You women are so foolish. Trust your emotions, and we men cannot come near you. Try your reason, and you become simpletons. You married at the impulse not of your emotion, but of your reason, and you now suffer. But pray lay the blame on yourself, and not on others."

"But—" interposed the woman.

"Silence! I am not going to listen to you. I am quite disgusted with you, imputing such motives to dear Willie. I am going. I'll come and see you again, when I hope to find you in a better frame of mind."

He had gone. With flushed face and tear-bedimmed eyes she rose. She started to go after him: paused. Slowly she turned and hid on the sofa.

A cry of childish laughter and merriment rose on the air from the next room and died away.

A door opened, a merry child with flowing golden hair, darted in.

"Oh! mummy, you here," it said, "we are just going out before dinner," and passed away.

The clock ticked on the mantelpiece.

The passage door opened, and John Coddington slowly entered reading a paper studiously, and passed over to the fire. Standing before the fire reading his paper, not noticing anything, two arms gently clasped him, and he turned his face to receive the warm fond kisses of his wife.

C. J. N. FLEMING.



A WINTER SUNSET.

THE frosty sky like a furnace burning,
The keen air, crisp and cold,
And a sunset that splashes the clouds with gold ;
But my heart to summer turning.

Come back, sweet summer ! come back again !
I hate the snow,
And the icy winds that the North lands blow,
And the fall of the frozen rain.

I hate the iron ground,
And the Christmas roses,
And the sickly day that dies when it closes,
With never a song or a sound.

Come back ! come back ! with your passionate heat,
And glowing hazes,
And your sun that shines as a lover gazes,
And your day with the tired feet.

ALFRED DOUGLAS.

THE HOUSE OF JUDGMENT.

AND there was silence in the House of Judgment, and the Man came naked before God.

And God opened the Book of the Life of the Man.

And God said to the Man, "Thy life hath been evil, and thou hast shown cruelty to those who were in need of succour, and to those who lacked help thou hast been bitter and hard of heart. The poor called to thee, and thou did'st not hearken, and thine ears were closed to the cry of the afflicted. The inheritance of the fatherless thou did'st take unto thyself, and thou did'st send the foxes into the vineyard of thy neighbour's field. Thou did'st take the bread of the children and give it to the dogs to eat, and the lepers who lived in the marshes, and were at peace and praised Me, thou did'st drive forth on to the highways, and on Mine earth, out of which I made thee, thou didst spill innocent blood."

And the Man made answer and said, "Even so did I."

And again God opened the Book of the Life of the Man.

And God said to the Man, "Thy life hath been evil, and thou did'st seek for the seven sins. The walls of thy chamber were painted with images, and from the bed of thine abominations thou did'st rise up to the sound of flutes. Thou did'st build seven altars to the sins I have suffered, and did'st eat of the thing that may not be eaten, and the purple of thy raiment was broidered with the three signs of shame. Thine idols were neither of gold nor of silver, which endure, but of flesh that dieth. Thou did'st stain their hair with colours, and set pomegranates in their hands. Thou did'st stain their feet with perfumes, and spread carpets before them. With antimony thou did'st stain their eyelids, and their bodies thou did'st smear with myrrh. Thou did'st bow thyself to the ground before them, and the thrones of the idols were set in the sun. Thou did'st show to the sun thy shame and to the moon thy madness."

And the Man made answer and said, "Even so did I."

And a third time God opened the Book of the Life of the Man.

And God said to the Man, "Evil hath been thy life, and with evil did'st thou requite good, and with wrongdoing kindness. The hands that fed thee thou did'st wound, and the breasts that gave thee suck thou did'st despise. He who came to thee with water went away thirsting, and the outlawed men who hid thee in their tents at night thou did'st betray before dawn. Thine enemy who spared thee thou did'st snare in an ambush, and the friend who walked with thee thou did'st sell for a price, and to those who brought thee Love thou did'st ever give Lust in thy turn."

And the man made answer and said, "Even so did I."

And God closed the Book of the Life of the Man, and said, "Surely I shall send thee to Hell. Even unto Hell shall I send thee."

And the Man cried out, "Thou canst not."

And God said to the Man, "Wherefore can I not send thee to Hell, and for what reason?"

And the Man made answer and said, "Because in Hell have I always lived."

And there was silence in the House of Judgment.

And after a space God spake, and said to the Man, "Seeing that I may not send thee to Hell, surely I shall send thee to Heaven. Even unto Heaven shall I send thee."

And the Man cried out, "Thou canst not."

And God said to the Man, "Wherefore can I not send thee to Heaven, and for what reason?"

And the Man made answer and said, "Because never, and in no place, have I been able to imagine Heaven."

And there was silence in the House of Judgment.

OSCAR WILDE.



ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Starik.—The title of your poem is very beautiful, but I don't like the poem.—ED.

J.B.H-B.—Your poems are tainted with ethics. I suspect you of being a don.—ED.

Cygnets.—Thanks. But you have not done justice to a good idea. Your story is not psychological enough.—ED.

Caliban.—You should certainly give up poetry. Why not emigrate? Literature is unknown in the colonies.—ED.

Narcissus.—Thanks for your photograph, it is perfectly charming. But why try and write? Why not be content to exist beautifully?—ED.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ALL communications, which must be accompanied by the writer's name and address (not necessarily for publication), should be addressed

THE EDITOR,
c/o MR. JAMES THORNTON,
HIGH STREET, OXFORD.



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IMPRESSIONS.

In White.

THE morning light was on the bed
Sheer silver laid on silver grey,
The sudden subtle dawn was shed
In argent fire, and night was day;
I rose and looked across the bay.
What morn will bring my love to me?
Ah, life is love and life is gay,
White sails upon a silver sea!

In Rose-Pink.

No more alone, but night is o'er
And to the beach our way we make
And strip on the familiar shore
While all the summer birds, awake,
The inland woods with music shake.
Sing birds, while rapt I gaze upon
Those glowing limbs, those lips which take
Love's rose-pink and vermillion.

In Violet.

The purple mystery of night
Once more upon the land descends,
And flaming sunset yields to light
Where blue with red in music blends,
The colour consecrate to friends,
The colour when the sun has set,
The line wherewith the vision ends
The secret of the violet.

CHARLES KAINS JACKSON.

ESSAYS I HAVE SHOWN UP.

No. I.—What is the true Method of Ethics?

THE question “What is the true Method of Ethics?” is one of that numerous body of questions, in which a complacent facility on the part of the interrogator is not balanced by a correspondingly complacent sense of triumph, on the part of the individual who attempts to answer it. Questions may be broadly divided into two classes: (1) *Those to which the interrogator may reasonably hope to get answers which may be either obviously or at least probably true*; (2) *Those to which the interrogator can have no expectation, reasonable or otherwise, of getting any answer which will not be obviously or at least probably untrue.*

To the former of these classes belongs the question: “What is twice two?” and indeed it may be taken to be as nearly perfect a specimen of its class as can be looked for in any sphere, short of an absolutely reasonable one, such as that conceived by Kant; it being understood that a question of class 1 is more perfect, in inverse proportion to the difficulty which is likely to be experienced in obtaining an answer to it. Thus the question, “What is twice two?” is one, in asking which, a seeker after truth may entertain a degree of hope amounting very nearly to a certainty of receiving a correct answer, even if the questioned individual be possessed of only so little intelligence as is often playfully, and to my mind erroneously, attributed to the shrimp or oyster. I say erroneously particularly with reference to the oyster, for on the subject of the intelligence of the shrimp I hold merely a negative view, being simply entirely unacquainted with any reason for supposing the animal in question to be any more deficient in intellect than any other fish or fowl. But with regard to the oyster, I cannot help feeling that the slight upon its intellectual capacity has been thrown upon it more through the paltry misconception of the vulgar, than the far-seeing wisdom of the philosopher, arising, as I firmly believe it to do, from a philistine

scorn of its sedentary and voiceless life, a scorn which I am so far from sharing that I have even had to struggle hard against the poison of a strange fascination, which the thought of its eternal silence, and the splendour of its vast ocean home, has forced upon me to such an extent, that my reason and my individuality itself have at times been almost forcibly merged in the infinite magnificence of its fatal charm.

But to return to our questions; as it is plain that the question, "What is twice two?" for the reasons referred to is as very nearly perfect an instance of class 1 as one can expect to find, it will easily be seen that in proportion as the difficulty of obtaining an answer which will be self-evidently true increases, so the perfection of the question in class 1 decreases. Thus to take an instance, the question "Does your mother know you're out?" will be a far less perfect example of a question in class 1 than the question "What is twice two?" and why? for this reason, that whereas the latter question admits of but one answer which is the correct one, namely, "four," which is obviously the true one; the former admits of an almost infinite variety of answers, the probable truth of any one of which will vary considerably, according to the knowledge and *bona fides* of the questioned.

Thus a man in answer to the enquiry, might in perfect good faith reply that his mother was aware that he was out, being himself under the distinct impression that his mother had witnessed his exit from an upper window. And yet it is conceivable that the young man (if indeed he be a young man at all, which is a matter open to a great deal of doubt, and which, as it does not come directly into the scope of the present paper, I prefer to discuss at another time), and yet it is conceivable, I say, that the young man (granting for the sake of argument that he is a young man), may have made the error of supposing that the figure which he saw at the window, and which he concluded to be his mother, was in reality his sister or one of the female servants; nor again is it altogether outside the range of

possibility that the figure he saw, or imagined he saw, at the window, was a phantom conjured up by his heated imagination. At any rate it will easily be seen that it is quite possible for a number of different answers to be given to this same question, which whether by accident or by design, are untrue; indeed it might at first sight appear to fall under the head of class 2, namely, *questions to which one cannot hope to get answers which are not obviously or probably untrue*; but a little thought will shew that there is sufficient possibility of getting a probably true answer to prevent this. It might indeed be said, with some plausibility, that the question being itself not a genuine question, asked for information, but a mocking gibe veiling itself under the interrogatory form, is not such as to elicit an answer at all, but rather to provoke another question, a form of repartee common in the early doctrines of Christianity. But this is mere quibble, for it is quite apparent that the question, "Does your mother know you're out?" *might* be asked in perfect sincerity, and with the object of obtaining a truthful reply, and it is from this point of view that we are discussing it. And in addition to this it may well be observed that if the philosopher were to avoid the use of all terms, and the employment of all objects which the tongues or hands of the vulgar had distorted or polluted, he would find himself debarred from the discussion and contemplation of some of the greatest wonders in the intellectual as well as the material world.

Granting then that the question is asked in *bona fide*, and that the questioned replies in the same spirit, there is a certain probability of getting a true answer; and, although it is perfectly true that instances of perfect good faith both in questioner and questioned on this particular point are rare, yet they are sufficient to place this question in class No. 1.

We now come to the 2nd class of questions, *those to which an interrogator cannot hope reasonably to obtain any answer which will not be obviously or probably untrue*. There are many questions of this class, but they will mostly

be found to deal with the abstract, and when they aim at exact accuracy in the abstract they may be at once recognized ; questions relating to accuracy in material things are mostly of the 1st class. A question such as, "What is the exact height of such and such a tree?" "What is the exact distance of — to —?" is manifestly capable of being answered with either obvious or probable truth. But change the question to, "What is the exact proportion of courage to obstinacy in a martyr?" and it is evident at once that nothing can be answered that will not be grossly improbable.

The reason of this is that there are no dimensions in the abstract, a man may have a clear idea of the relative proportions of two qualities in his head, but he cannot express it in words ; he cannot measure courage in feet and inches. Now Methods of Ethics are abstract things, and to attempt to label one as true is to try to give it a dimension.

What is meant by the True Method of Ethics? That method which is *more* right than any other method, which has a *greater amount* of Truth in it. Acting then according to my own law, I recognize the attempt to find the true method of Ethics as an attempt to measure the abstract, therefore the question "What is the true Method of Ethics?" falls under the head of class 2: *questions to which the interrogator cannot hope to obtain answers which will not be obviously or probably untrue.*

To attempt then to discuss this question further would be an insult to the intelligence of the reader ; for how can I ask him to follow me into the maze of argument and discussion which I *might* put before him to shew him what my own view on the subject is, when I have convinced myself and I trust him also, that my view, whatever it may be, will be obviously or probably untrue. I am compelled then reluctantly to abandon the search after truth, or at any rate to conduct it mentally and not on paper, and to the original hopefully propounded question, "What is the true Method of Ethics?" to answer sadly, "I do not know."

ALFRED DOUGLAS.

SONNET.*The Louvre, May, 1848.*

VENUS OF MILO.

HEINE THE POET.

- H.* Dear lady mine of Milo, I am here;
V. To worship at my long neglected shrine?
H. To drink perchance a cup of deadly wine:
V. With me to guide; what need is there of fear?
H. Life is become a leaf of yesteryear—
V. My poor pale poet—yet not wholly mine—
H. Alas! the bitter Rood is for a sign.
V. Woe's me! the Christ steals my last worshipper!
H. 'Twixt Heaven and Hell His torn Hands beckon me.
V. O for some isle Aegean, far away!
H. Crawling from out my mattress-grave I came—
V. Not one is left to call on Beauty's name.
H. To bid my own heart's Queen farewell for aye.
V. Ah Heaven! that I had arms to succour thee.

A. R. BAYLEY.

OF GREEK NOSES.

Mayhap there is more meant than is said in it, quoth my father. Learned men, brother Toby, don't write dissertations upon noses for nothing.—TRISTRAM SHANDY.

“**N**ON cuicunque datum est habere nasum,” said an adept in the lost art of irony. By Martial’s time the Greeks and Romans of pure blood had dwindled to a remnant, some sped in conquering the world, some in dividing its spoils, the most in dissipating them. Barbarians from the provinces were for filling the gaps. Half bred, half civilised, they knew how to mimic outward observances, habit of dress, and cast of phrase. But, habit of mind and cast of feature, essential things, they could not imitate. The mark of the beast was upon their faces. A palpable distinction—their nose bewrayed them. So now, many centuries afterwards, still prevails this crudity and uncomeliness, this “indefectible defect,” in the most striking and significant of features. We other barbarians are versed all our school days in the language and the literature of Greeks and Romans: in after years the Romans are our patterns in the affairs, the Greeks in the amenities of life. But to what purpose? The form baffles, the spirit eludes our journeyman imitation: and all that comes of it is a motley, a masquerade. Still Martial reminds us from the grave that we, our cultured selves, are but barbarians, though, it may be—differing so far from our forefathers—“of a larger growth.”

And yet, it will be said, do we not hear tell of Greek and Roman noses in talk and books? The heroine of the novel, that mirror of contemporary life, has as surely a Greek nose as the hero has an aquiline. To examine, then, this opinion. “The Vicar’s youngest daughter, Ermentrude,” writes a lady novelist in great vogue, “had eyes of watchet blue, soft as a dove’s, a delicately chiselled nose of the purest Greek, a wealth of crisp auburn hair, and pearly teeth which glinted in the sunlight. She painted *à ravir* in water-colours and sang divinely.” The magic

of the writer's touch sets the likeness of this paragon as plainly before us as though it were some gorgeous chromo-lithograph in the Christmas number of an illustrated paper. We can see her benign and vacant eye, her simpering rose-bud mouth, set to say "prunes and prism": we mark the stilted fascinations of her manner, the stereotyped seductions of her carriage, and, *coup de grace*, the short, limp, puny nose, of no curve nor proportion nor character. Set beside it the nose of the true Greek, sensuous, serene, sublime. Should you see it in the flesh—and I think you will not—by these signs you shall know it. Its line is straight from the forehead till it breaks in sinuous, rippling curves at the full and sensitive nostril. Its measure (one third, says Fuseli, of the profile) is in agreement with the attendant features: "Take one-twelfth of an inch from the nose of the Apollo Belvidere and the god is lost." Such is the glorious nose of the Discobolos of Myron, of the Hermes of Praxitiles; godlike in that it shows the perfect man (the most beautiful of divine creations); the nose of the Zeus of Phidias and the Jehovah of Michael Angelo. "Look on that picture and on this, Hyperion to a Satyr."

Candid and judicious reader, observe the noses of your neighbours and acquaintance! Are they not all bulbous or pinched, simian or beaked or retroussés (elegant euphemism), imperfect in themselves, incongruous with their fellow features? Other points, eyes large and melting, hair fine and crisp, teeth white and regular, are common in the lower as in the higher creation. Animals have them, gazelles for instance, and terriers of choice. Locks of jet and languishing almond-shaped eyes are the charms of the Houris. These and no others Ferdusi sings, the greatest except "Omar" Fitzgerald of Mohammedan poets. "The amaranthine eyes of the angels vie with the azure of heaven, and the glory of their flaxen tresses with the glittering gold and gleaming gems of its ornate and eligible mansions." Thus wrote Ordericus Vitalis, a

monkish chronicler, as he related in his *empesé* and Ouidaesque Latin—so singularly modern—that celebrated papal oracle which compared the angels with some captive Angles. But of noses he is silent, and the noses of the Angles are commonplace. Our Protestants, too (witness their Christmas cards), have endorsed this description of the modern Olympians. For once they are at one with the Pope; reflecting in their vein of original humour that his puns are more orthodox than his bulls. Barbarians all! Our text includes them in the same condemnation. “*Nasum non habent.*”

In the perfect nose, then, the Greek nose, is contained all that is lacking in the cases cited—the beauty and the virtue of man. Never can a beautiful nose be seen without a beautiful face around it: nor a beautiful face without a comely body: nor a perfect face and body without a fair soul within. This is the conclusion of all poets and Platonists. It is summed in the line of Spenser, “the poet’s poet,” more Platonist than Plato himself, a verse as simple and exquisite as though it were of Sophocles:

“All that is good is beautiful and fair.”

And science thinks the same. A notable empiric, one Lavater, a friend of Goethe, wrote a great book called “*Physionomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntniss und Menschenliebe*” “for the furtherance of the knowledge of man and the love of man.” For him too and his system the nose was the central and crowning feature on which did rest all character and comeliness. He forestalled in his flights of speculation the plodding inferences of the modern scientific psychologists. Like them he held that the lineaments of man were “the outward and visible sign of his inward and spiritual grace”—to borrow a phrase from our beautiful Catechism; that the bodily form corresponded with the psychical idea. Unlike them, anticipating, doubtless, the research of the future, he found in the nose the compendious epitome, the abstract and symbol of the character of its possessor, or, in the

language of legal demonology—to use a finer precision—its “possessee.” In the nose, then, reside the great Capital qualities: only by this cult can we learn in Goethe’s oft-quoted phrase “Im Schönen, Guten, Wahren, resolut zu leben.” Adore only the beautiful in this, its symbol and summit, and the rest will be added unto you—all the knowledge, wisdom and virtue by which it is informed. The nose is the test of morality as it is the touchstone of beauty: by its very nature it is an end unto itself.

To apply, then, this criterion to the needs of the day: for the English essay, that prodigy of literature, is nothing if not practical. The noses of our authors, our politicians, and our proletariat are, ex hypothesi, out of joint. So, therefore, are the times. What does it profit to analyse the uninteresting, the offensive with Bourget and Zola. They have no noses. The nose of Mr. Gladstone approaches the aquiline. But alas! the bend is too abrupt, the caesura (like that of our modern verse-makers) too near the middle. He is a publicist, and the truth must be outright, sad though it be of a man so nearly great—he has the nose not of an eagle but of a jackdaw. Why then discuss Home Rule? In all callings are in vain to seek the virtues which the Greek nose enshrines; the “Allgemeinheit und Heiterkeit” of Winkelmann, “the breadth and generality, the blitheness and felicity” of Mr. Pater’s happy rendering. To win back these qualities the Greek nose must be restored; but how? I adopt, as a token of admiration and regret, the method of the late M. Taine.

There are, accordingly, three modes of nose-reformation—a moral change, a change in the environment, and a physical change. For the first, cultivate the Greek manner of life. Inspire the dry bones of “Literae Humaniores” (*sic*) with the spirit that is sedulously lost in the letter. To enlarge were useless or unnecessary. Environment, the second mode, saves so much trouble. A few statues for the niches of the colleges in the High,

a Hermes to every lamp-post. Surely the breaking of lamps and the detachment of knockers is a little banausic in our civilised Oxford. The riots of our youth should be as classic as their studies; and, then, to think of the reaction of horror and dismay which would stir dons from their moral torpor to a holy indignation! To contemplate these statues would be an education in itself, and we should all be "made perfect by visible beauty."

Last, there is need of a physical revolution, and, indeed, this is all that is required. Mr. John Morley has nobly said that a care for the physical, moral, and social well-being of its members is the first and highest duty of the State. This millenium would at once be attained if only the community were furnished forth with perfect noses. Let the State establish a department of nasology, a school of nasologists. It would be their function and privilege to fashion on the model of the Apollo Belvidere the crude amorphous nose of each new-born infant. Then, at last, Individualist and Socialist will join hands: all "ists" and "isms" will be returned to the past. Every man will be good, useful, beautiful. We shall all be Hellenists, and there will be no more decadence.

But this era will be long a dawning. For a while, at least, we can dally in the twilight of the dim incomprehensible; crooning our lamentations by the waters of Babylon, while we turn our gaze languidly westward to the murk in which faded the bright sunlight of Greece. Pathetically we sigh with Villon, the first of the decadents (and he was hanged), sympathetically we echo with our own Dante Gabriel "*Mais où sont les nez d'antan?*" "*Where is the nose of an age gone by?*"

II.



THE SERAPH AND THE SONG.

I SANG a song by the silent mere,
A song of my love :
I sang to the birds, and the sky above,
To the trees in the wood,
And the water that sleeps in the water-flood,
And I sang not for man to hear.

But my song fell down from the sky
And lay on the earth,
And the many heard it, with scornful mirth
Or angry mutter ;
And they trampled it into the gutter,
And stifled its cry.

And I hid my face for shame of my song,
And I broke my lute,
And my half-fledged voice died wingless and mute.
And I sought my song, both far and near,
To hide it where never a man might hear ;
And vainly I sought it and long.

For a seraph, that rode on the wings of the north,
Had found it lying
In the foot-trod mud of the street ; and sighing,
Made it white with the tears of seven times seven,
And carried it through the gates of Heaven ;
And God did not drive it forth.

ALFRED DOUGLAS.

ROBERT HERRICK.

WE are fortunate in that we know of Herrick's life only so much as is necessary for a bare sketch: we know who he was, and who his friends were; there is no shroud of mystery cast round him by time to encourage the curious and the dryasdusts to grovel among records in order to drag to light some paltry fact which might fit a theory. At the same time we do not know too much, we have few of those intimate touches of the man's life, which, however interesting, however missed, tend always to lead us off the path. The brightness of one particular thread in the tapestry does not tempt the eye to follow it so closely that the beauty of the whole fades away into the mistiness of that which is beyond the view.

Herrick's own words most perfectly give us the 'argument' of his book.

I sing of brooks, of blossoms, birds, and bowers,
Of April, May, of June and July flowers.

The greatest of all prologues only has a surer note than Herrick's Prologue to the *Hesperides*. If Lowell can say—"Though I repeat a thousand times: 'When that Aprille with his showeres sootë;' still at the thousandth time a breath of uncontaminated springtide lifts the hair upon my forehead;"—so can we say that as "uncontaminated a breath of English springtide" blows out to meet us as we read "*Corrinna's Maying*," or "*The Country Life*." We smell "the breath of great-ey'd kine, sweet as the blossoms of the vine;" or see the "dancing feet—tripping the comely country round, with daffodils and daisies crown'd." If sometimes the followers of Björnson or Ibsen would condescend to go back with Herrick and take a breath of open air, they might acknowledge that the world contains something wider and fresher than the atmosphere of middle-class Norwegian kitchens or "parlours."

The common estimate of Herrick is that he is an old pagan, and that we must picture him sitting with his jolly old head crowned with a garland of roses, cocked

perhaps a little askew over his roguish winking eyes, with a smiling lady of doubtful reputation dandled on either knee. With this estimate, to come upon a lyric addressed to "Julia her Legs," and over the page perhaps that fine epigram, "Devotion makes the Deity," would force us to conclude that sensuality was his natural level, and that any higher flights were but the heavy floundering flappings of affectation. But it is fairer to take every type of his verses as illustrating, each and every, some side of a many sided life. Herrick, as all who go to him will find, is ready to laugh with our mirth, grow serious in our staid moments, or weep with our tears.

Come sit we by the fireside,
And roundly drink we here,
Till that we see our cheeks ale-dyed
And noses tanned with beer.

Or in a more refined moment—and it is curious to notice the care with which the different tones are distinguished by the rhythm—

Bring me my rosebuds, drawer, come,
So while I thus sit crown'd,
I'll drink the aged Caecubum
Until the roof turn round.

But more prominent than his mirth is Herrick's melancholy. It is a melancholy not drawn from a constant and obstinate gaze upon the wounds and scars and diseases of poor humanity, but rather inspired by the too keen appreciation and delight in the fleeting beauties of flowers, and maidens, and bright sunshiny days. It is an after-note that is struck almost with too persistent frequency. Take nearly every one of his exquisite lyrics to flowers—To Daffodils—To Blossoms—To Primroses. Of so many it is difficult to choose one more characteristic than the rest; but there is one "than which," Mr. Swinburne says "Herrick has written nothing sweeter or better." No one can have failed to have felt the sad emptiness and dreariness of fields at sundown, yet after reading "To Meadows," that feeling must have been touched with a deeper and fuller colour.

Ye have been fresh and green,
Ye have been filled with flowers;
And ye the walks have been
Where maids have spent their hours.

* * * *

Ye've heard them sweetly sing,
And seen them in a round;
Each virgin like a spring,
With honeysuckles crowned.

But now we see none here
Whose silvery feet did tread

So too can he share in our tears.

The shades grow great, but greater grows our sorrow
But let's go steep
Our eyes in sleep,
And meet to weep
To-morrow.

It does not much matter to us that Herrick published his *Hesperides* amid the crash of the Monarchy as Théophile Gautier published his *Emaux et Camées* during the Siege of Paris.

Be Herrick Royalist or Roundhead, or but a poor trimmer, he had to the depth of his heart a pure appreciation of England, her people, her broad meadows, her bright banks of flowers, her lads and her lasses, in their country dances, barley breakes, and old world games and customs.

There is a gorgeous poem of Lodge, "full," as Mr. Palgrave remarks, "of the colouring of the Venetian Artists"—which, if read side by side with *Corinna's* *Maying*, throws up the more sober hues of Herrick's palette.

It can well be understood that Lodge wrote during a voyage to the Canaries his verses to "*Rosaline*," but that Herrick kept before his eyes the rosebud faces of English maids and boys peeping out from between masses of white thorn blossom, clad in their bright May-green.

Herrick's power could not be better exemplified than by *Corinna's* *Maying*. Without a superfluous word,

with an unerring touch he has painted the picture, starting with the eagerness of childhood, to end with the sad note of the prescience of a time when "the fresh quilted colours" of the dawn will not call him from his last sleep. It is this sureness of touch which is one of the greatest characteristics of Herrick. In four lines he can bring up and set before us a picture as perfectly and with as dainty a solidity as any painter. We see the nymphs drinking at the fountain, their white hands turning the cup's brim all to lilies; or, in the crystal lines "To Julia Washing." We almost hear the clear water rippling round her as she stands half hid by the stream which crosses her like a cloud of lawn. Only to read the titles of many of his lyrics is sufficient; "To Julia's hair in a golden net," or "Love in a Shower of Blossoms."

You may turn the leaves of the *Hesperides* and, to quote Mr. Gosse, find suddenly lines that "are like an opal set in some rare gold setting."

One more characteristic we may notice—his power of musical rhythm. No matter whether in simple couplets, or in the most fantastic and delicate trills, he is master alike in each. Take only this—"To Julia's Voice," which in sound apart from sense, distils music,

So smooth, so sweet, so silv'ry is thy voice
As, could they hear, the damn'd would make no noise
But listen to thee, walking in thy chamber,
Melting melodious words to lutes of amber.

Herrick is above all a singer of songs, for singing "He has the merits of Shelley and Coleridge with the capacities of Tommy Moore or Haynes Bayley." To appreciate them fully we ought to hear them sung by a good singer to a good setting. In Hatton's setting of the greatest of all Herrick's love-songs—*To Anthea*—we realise the rise and fall and fullness of the passion; starting slowly and humbly it rises higher and higher till it rests in a spirit of entire and absolute devotion. Yet at the same time a quiet reading will make the words sing themselves into the memory.

Herrick's charm and grace are so obvious that they must appeal to every one ; he is too delicate to analyse, for the effect is somewhat fleeting, and apt, if too keenly, too subtly pressed, to fade away. Whatever the effect his lyre may have on different ears, the strings will never be dumb, for his subject lasts to the end of time. As a true poet that is still left to us says of a singer of these later days, so also can we say of Herrick—

In vain men tell us time can alter
Old loves—or make old memories falter,
That with the old year, the old year's life closes ;
The old dew still falls on the old sweet flowers,
The old sun revives the new fledg'd hours,
The old summer rears the new-born roses.

CECIL WEATHERLY.



IN MEMORIAM E. B. F.

THEY brought him home when the sun
In the southern sky sank red,
When the winter day was done;
On his own white bed
They laid him cold and dead.

They told how they found him there
In the water, dead and cold.
Did the clear ice fail to bear ?
Was he over bold ?
Did he fall ?—'Tis a tale untold.

Shroud of the winter mist,
Splendid and white and dumb !
Cold were the lips I kiss'd
And his fingers numb ;
Will never the warm breath come ?

Friend and more than a friend,
Brother and comrade true,
We are come to the dim sad end
Of the way we knew :
I bleed in the dark for you.

The way that we two together
Hand in hand have gone,
Thro' sunny and stormy weather
On still and on ——
And now I am left alone.

I am left alone and I dream
Of the days spent side by side,
Of nights on the summer stream
Or the open tide,
With love for our star to guide.

Our love was as pure and free
As the grace that the lilies win,
As God judg'd you and me
Not a trace of sin
Or shame was there found therein.

Our love was as fervent-deep
As the heart of a golden wine,
In lands where the warm suns keep,
Thro' the days divine,
Long watch o'er the fruitful vine.

Brave boy with the bright blue eyes,
Faithful and fair and strong!
Dead now—when the short day dies
Like a broken song,
And the night comes dark and long.

Friend and more than a friend,
Brother and comrade true,
We are come to the dim sad end
Of the way we knew:
I bleed in the dark for you.

G. G. S. G.

Jan. 10th.



**SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE BEAUTY OF
UNPUNCTUALITY.**

THERE is an old proverb which says that "procrastination is the thief of time." This has been amended and improved, along with many other proverbs, by a brilliant and witty modern author, who says "Punctuality is the thief of time." This latter saying is very true. Nothing is more fatal to time than punctuality; under its influence time gallops away. It cuts time up into little square bits, all quite square; and when the process is finished there is no time left, but each little square bit represents some one thing, such as breakfast, a lecture, or luncheon. So the saying is very true and very subtle. And yet if we look at the old saying in a certain way, and a way different from the usual way, we will see that it too contains its modicum of truth. In both the proverb quoted, and in its emendation, the word "time" is, I presume, taken to mean *one's own time*. I mean that when the author of the proverb, whoever he was, originally wrote it he intended to intimate that procrastination was an undesirable thing, and that the unpunctual man was a loser by practising unpunctuality. Mr. Oscar Wilde at once perceived the fallaciousness of this idea, and very properly corrected the proverb into what I have already quoted. He saw that procrastination was a charming thing, he realized that unpunctuality made life beautiful, and he noted the alarming and dangerous prevalence of baldness, seriousness and solid common-sense among the punctual. But now that the old proverb has been effectually knocked on the head, or perhaps rather I should say neatly spitted, and now that it is hiding itself away among the middle classes, let us seek it and find it again, and, by misinterpreting the meaning of its original propounder, give to it a new vitality, which will enable it to hold up its head again, and even to shake hands with Mr. Oscar Wilde's emendation.

To do this we have merely to interpret the word "time" in the proverb as "*other people's time*."

Then it becomes quite true and, what is more important, quite modern to say that procrastination is the thief of time. Of course it steals other people's time and gives it to the unpunctual man; and by so doing it fulfils another saying that "To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away." For the punctual man, as all the world knows, never has any time to spare, *his* time is money and he never throws that away recklessly; whereas the unpunctual man has all his time through all the day to do what he likes with, and in addition to that he can add on whenever it suits him, those other little bits that his slave Procrastination steals from the punctual. By giving this meaning to the word "*time*" we have brought the old proverb round again, and it has now been shown that the statement "Procrastination is the thief of time" is in one sense as true and as modern as the statement "Punctuality is the thief of time" is in another. But, no doubt, there is still a large proportion of people who cling to the old idea that punctuality is a desirable thing and unpunctuality the reverse; and who, although they must have observed the frightful evils which spring from punctuality, and the fearful tendency among the punctual towards early rising, regular exercise, and methodical habits, yet persist in going to bed at a reasonable hour in order that they may be able to rise for early breakfast, or worse still attend a roll-call in the morning.

Of such I would earnestly beg that they will spend a few moments of that portion of the day which is set apart for,—shall we say reading? (in the academical sense of the word), in cultivating habits of unpunctuality; they will, no doubt, find it difficult at first, the path is steep and is beset with thorns and quagmires, not to say dons, but perseverance will be rewarded and, although they may often slip back and waver, yet if they earnestly fix their eyes on *the absolute unpunctuality* and struggle on, they will in the end find it easy and pleasant. Once they have tasted of the real fruit of

unpunctuality, I have no fears for them ; they will look back with horror to their former lives, and regret every hour that they lived as slaves to punctuality.

But the unpunctual man is not as might, perhaps, be supposed the only one who is benefited by his own unpunctuality. No, it is his mission to bring light and joy to those who never knew it before ; even the most degraded of the punctual sometimes benefits by his appearance. Who that has ever attended a dull lecture (say on the Ethics of Aristotle) and has come, we won't say quite in time, but reasonably early, can have failed to note the joyous and inspiring effect of the arrival of the unpunctual man, say half an hour late, the ripple of happy laughter that flows through the room, the mild joke on the part of the lecturer, perhaps himself not the least pleased at the interruption, the blush of pleasure, and conscious well-doing on the part of the late arrival, and the triumphant and delighted pride of his close personal friends who indirectly share, as is only right with friends, in his distinction ? Again what a great thing it is to be late for dinner ! It is true that when people are waiting for an expected guest who is late, they are apt to say unkind things about him and to regard him with hatred and enmity, but when he *does* arrive they forgive him, and even bless him ; for his arrival is the signal for the adjournment to the dining-room and thus he appears as a sort of deliverer from famine and (quite illogically no doubt) the very cause of the feast ; and, besides, the unpunctual man who arrives late for dinner is bound to provide some beautiful and highly coloured legend to account for his lateness, and thus conversation is promoted, fiction is encouraged, and a basis is formed for the evening's conversation.

It is now so generally admitted that punctuality at breakfast (unless for some particular reason), is not a thing to be encouraged, that it is hardly worth while to discuss that point, and I will content myself with saying that, in my opinion, a man who consistently

comes down in time for breakfast and expects others to do likewise, is quite capable of going out for a walk *before breakfast in the fresh morning air*, and such a man usually goes to sleep in a chair and snores directly after dinner, "let no such man be trusted."

Again, how many people have escaped terrible deaths by being late for trains? the number must be something enormous; all the trains that *I* have ever missed have come to the most fearful ends; they have either run off the lines, or gone away from London, or stopped at stations to drink water; and who shall say which of these calamities is the greatest?

But why should I multiply instances of the beauty and blessedness of unpunctuality? Need I remind my readers that the Prussians, by being late for the Battle of Waterloo, not only got at least an equal amount of glory with the English, but to a large extent escaped the discomfort and inconvenience of being shot down in thousands and wounded? or need I dwell upon the exquisite and subtle pleasure which is to be obtained by arriving at a country church after the end of the second lesson, a pleasure which (I am told) is only to be equalled by that of arriving late for a wedding when one is acting one of the leading parts? I feel that it is superfluous; the unpunctual man will agree with me, he will understand my feelings; but the punctual man, being by nature a philistine, cannot understand them and never will. I do not wish to be misunderstood, I know that there are many people who are unpunctual by temperament, and yet are forced by circumstances to be punctual, and I sympathise deeply with them; there are no greater martyrs to be found in this world.

But for those who are really punctual by nature and temperament, there is little hope; they must be philistines. But some philistines are nice, and a nice philistine is one of the most charming and refreshing things in life.

ALFRED DOUGLAS.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Lionel Quirethorn.—Any one reading your poem could see that you have a sense of beauty, and a certain power of expression; but your poem has not enough form, and altogether shows too much immaturity of power. I like it and I like you for having written it, but I can't put it in. Write another, and remember that while a Hylas can trip prettily through the flowery meadows of rhyme, it needs a Hercules to scale the splendid sterile steeps of blank verse.—ED.

Ariel.—Come, come, Caliban, it is no use your changing your *nom-de-plume*, I recognize your hand-writing and your style: for Heaven's sake go to Australia, I adjure you by Sycorax your mother.—ED.

The Editor feels constrained to apologise for the frequent recurrence of his own signature in the present number, but, *faute de mieux*, he has been compelled to fill up the paper with his own articles. No doubt the approaching end of Term has caused this falling off in the number of suitable prose contributions; there is no lack of poetry.

Will the gentleman who wrote to reproach the Editor for the *injurious* nature of the *sweetmeats* he has provided for the *few*, and at the same time talked glibly of the Editor's *wide opportunities* of obtaining *wholesome intellectual food for the many*, kindly note the above?

The Editor would also like to take this opportunity of emphatically disclaiming any intention or desire to provide wholesome food for the many. Surely the many ought to be quite satisfied with Bovril and *The Isis*.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ALL communications, which must be accompanied by the writer's name and address (not necessarily for publication), should be addressed—The Editor, c/o Mr. James Thornton, High Street, Oxford.

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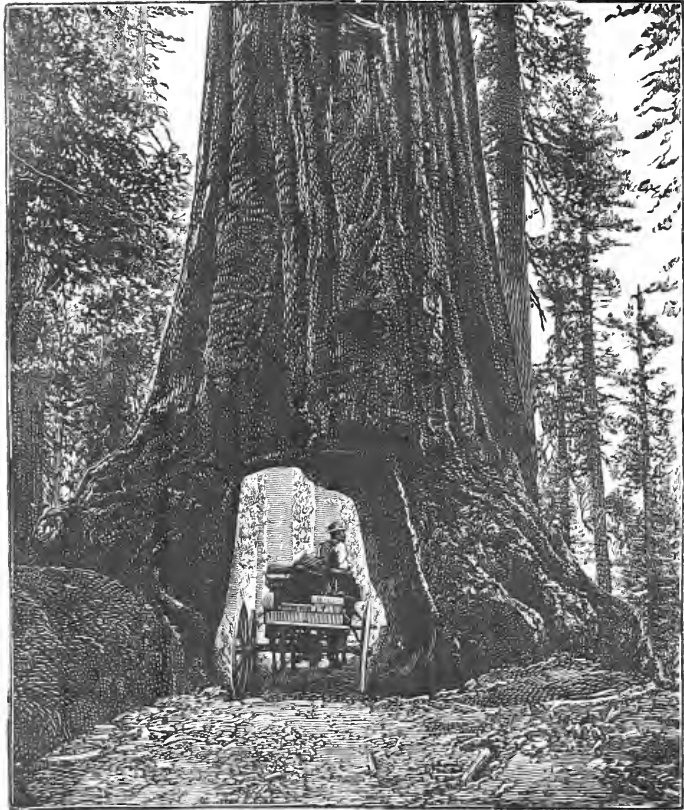
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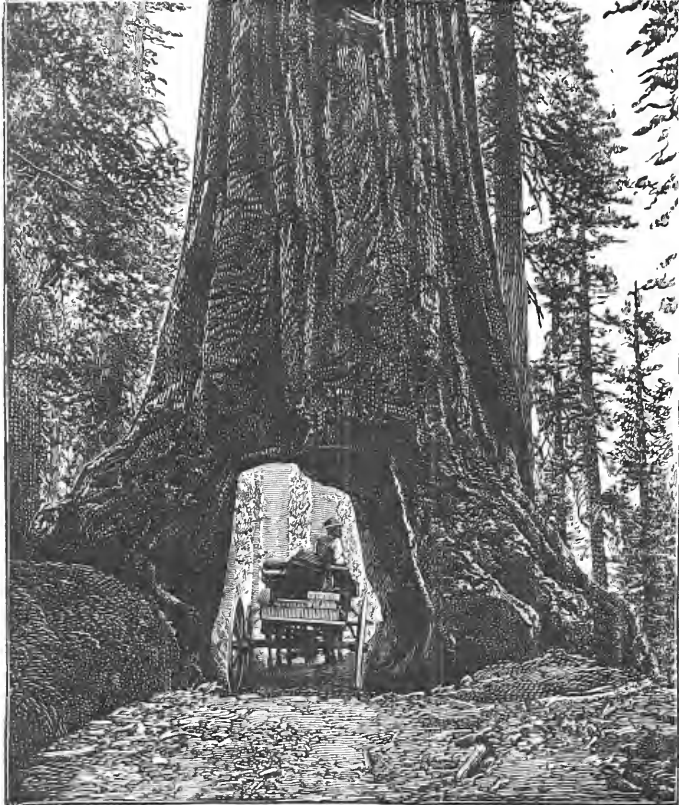
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The Spirit Lamp.

VOL. 4. No. I.

MAY 4, 1893.

SONNET.

*A letter written in prose poetry by Mr. Oscar Wilde to a friend,
and translated into rhymed poetry by a poet of no importance.*

HYACINTHE ! ô mon cœur ! jeune dieu doux et blond !
Tes yeux sont la lumière de la mer ! ta bouche,
Le sang rouge du soir où mon soleil se couche . . .
Je t'aime, enfant câlin, cher aux bras d'Apollon.

Tu chantaïs, et ma lyre est moins douce, le long
Des rameaux suspendus que la brise effarouche,
A frémir, que ta voix à chanter, quand je touche
Tes cheveux couronnés d'acanthé et de houblon.

Mais tu pars ! tu me fuis pour les Portes d'hercule ;
Va ! rafraîchis tes mains dans le clair crépuscule
Des choses où descend l'âme antique. Et reviens,

Hyacinthe adoré ! hyacinthe ! hyacinthe !
Car je veux voir toujours dans les bois syriens
Ton beau corps étendu sur la rose et l'absinthe.

PIERRE LOUÏS.

BEETHOVEN'S CONCERTO IN E DUR.

THE pianoforte, in contrast with a full orchestra of string and wind instruments—how it excites our nerves—it stimulates imagination beyond the reaches of pure music. I doubt whether the marriage of the clavier with violins and hautbois be legitimate. But I will record some of the fancies evoked in my brain by the shuddering thrills of that disparity in *timbre*.

I seem to feel and see a rill of cold pellucid water flowing athwart hot masses of ebullient lava, the thrilling water-rill itself, emergent, irreducible to steam. Then moonlight glancing across and flooding a fierce pyrotechnical display of rockets and of Roman candles on the sea at Naples. Then blueish beams of aurora borealis palpitating upwards through crimson oceans of tremulous Arctic lights. Then sprays of alamander-flowers, detached against a background of burning taxonia-stars and bunches of flushed bougainvillia bloom, all smothered in the veils and woven verdure of a vast conservatory.

Beethoven evoked symphonious effects from the pianoforte. He brought the cold pure water-rill, the moon's frigidity, the pale auroral pulse, the amber bloom, into vital art-relation with volcanic forces in his sympathetic and aspirant orchestra.

The gloom and glory of intercepting and sustaining tones from wood and string. Tumultuary colours toned from volumes of contracted, intertwined, and interpenetrating instruments of sound that throb upon our sensibilities.

Beethoven, first of modern masters in the poetry of tone—unless, peradventure, Weber broke the path as pioneer before him—assigned its right place to the clavier among the organs fashioned by man's hand to translate the soul's emotion into music.

Beethoven brought the specific quality of the piano-forte into due relation with those elder and more potent instruments of metal, wood and string. He made us know it as a liquid, candid, self-eliminating, self-detaching spirit of sound—a spirit fit to raise its voice of transpicuous utterance among the host of congregated, soul-compelling, sense-subduing, force-evoking daimons of the orchestra.

Not indeed as a seraph or a devil to command, but as an angel to be loved and tended by the clamorous choir, to evoke their sympathy and their collaboration—standing the while aloof from them, although with kindred feeling—like the soul of a woman or a saintly youth, who keeps apart from the world's turmoil, but adds a clarity of accent to the concert of contending cries and groans and hymns and passions.

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

HOW WE LOST THE BOOK OF JASHER.

EVERYONE who knows anything about art, archæology, or science has heard of the famous Fitz-Taylor Museum at Oxbridge. And even outsiders who care for none of these things have heard of the quarrels and internal dissensions that have disturbed that usual calm which ought to reign within the walls of a museum. The illustrious founder, to whose munificence we owe this justly famous institution, has provided in his will for the support of four curators, who govern the two separate departments of science and art, and the University has been in the habit of making grants of money from time to time to these separate departments for the acquisition of scientific or archæological curiosities and MSS. I suppose there was something wrong in the system, but whatever it may be, it led to those notorious jealousies and disputes. At the time I am writing of, the principal curators of the art section were Professor Girdelstone and Mr. Monteagle, of Prince's College, while I looked after the scientific welfare of the museum with Lowestoft as my understudy—he was practically a nonentity and an authority on lepidoptera. Now whenever a grant was made to the left wing of the building, as I call it, I always used to say that science was being

sacrificed to archæology. I mocked at the illuminated MS. over which Girdelstone grew enthusiastic and the musty theological folios which Monteagle had purchased. They heaped abuse upon me, of course, when my turn came, and cracked many a quip on my splendid skeleton of the ichthyosaurus, the only known specimen from Greenland. At one time the strife broke into print, and the London press animadverted on our conduct. It became a positive scandal. We were advised, I remember, to wash our dirty linen at home, and though I have often wondered why the press should act as a voluntary laundress on such occasions, I suppose the remark is a just one.

There came a day when we took the advice of the press, and from then until now science and art have gone hand in hand at the University of Oxbridge. How the breach was healed forms the subject of the present leaf from my memoirs.

America, it has been wisely said, is the great land of fraud. It is the Egypt of the modern world. From America came the spiritualists, from America bogus goods, and cheap ideas and pirated editions, and from America I have every reason to believe came Dr. Groschen. It is true that he spoke American with an English accent at times, at other times English with a German. But if his ancestors came from the Rhine, that he received his education on the other side of the Atlantic I have no doubt. Why he came to Oxbridge I cannot say. He appeared quite suddenly, like a comet. He brought introductions from various parts of the world, from the English Embassy at Constantinople, from the British and German Schools of Archæology at Athens, from certain French Egyptologists at

Alexandria, and a holograph letter from Archbishop Sarpedon, Patriarch of Hermaphroditopolis, Curator of the MSS. in the Monastery of St. Basil, at Mount Olympus. It was this last that endeared him, I believe, to the High Church party in Oxbridge. Dr. Groschen was already the talk of the University, the lion of the hour, before I met him, and there was already a rumour of an honorary degree before even I saw him in the flesh, at the high table of my college, as guest of the Provost. If Dr. Groschen did not inspire me with any confidence, I cannot say that he excited any feeling of distrust. He was a small, black, commonplace looking little man, very neat in his attire, without the alchemical look of most archæologists. Had I known then, as I know now, that he presented his first credentials to Professor Girdelstone, I might have suspected him. Of course I took it for granted they were friends. When the University was ringing with praises of the generosity of Dr. Groschen in transferring his splendid collections of Greek inscriptions to the FitzTaylor Museum, I rejoiced; the next grant would be devoted to science, in consideration of the already crowded galleries of the art and archæological section. I only pitied the fatuity of the authorities for being grateful. Dr. Groschen had now wound himself into everybody's good wishes, and the University degree had been conferred. He had been offered a fine set of rooms in a college famous for culture. He was a well-known figure on the Q.P. But he was not always with us; he went to Greece or the East sometimes, for the purpose, it was said, of adding to the Groschen collection, now the glory of the FitzTaylor.

It was after a rather prolonged period of absence that

he wrote to Girdelstone privately, that he had made a great discovery, and on his return brought with him, he said, some MSS. which had been unearthed in the monastic library of St. Basil, where he bought them for an enormous sum from Sarpedon, the Patriarch of Hermaphroditopolis, and was willing to sell them to "some public institution" for very little over the original price. Girdelstone told several of us in confidence. It was public news next day. Scholars grew excited; there had been hints at the recovery of a lost MS., "which was to add to our knowledge of the antique world and materially alter accepted views of the early state of Roman and Greek society." On hearing the news I smiled. "Some institution," that was suspicious—MSS.—they meant forgery. It was described as a palimpsest MS., consisting of fifty or sixty leaves of papyrus. On one side was a portion of the *Lost Book of Jasher*, of a date not later than the fourth century, on the other in ancient characters the two notorious works of Aulus Gellius, which Suetonius tells us Tiberius ordered to be burned—*De moribus Romanorum*.

But why should I go over old history? Every one remembers the excitement that the discovery caused—the leaders in the *Times* and the *Athenæum*, the doubts of the sceptical, the enthusiasm of the archæologists, the jealousy of the Berlin authorities, the offers from all the libraries of Europe, the aspersions of the British Museum. "Why," asked indignant critics "did Dr. Groschen offer his MS. to the authorities at Oxbridge?" "Because Oxbridge had been the first to recognise his genius," was the crushing reply. And Professor Girdelstone said that should the FitzTaylor fail to acquire the MS. by any false economy on the part of the

University authorities, the prestige of the museum would be gone. But this is all old history. I only remind the reader of what he knows already. I had begun to bring all my powers, and the force of the scientific world in Oxbridge, to bear in opposition to the purchase of the MS. I had pulled every wire I knew, and execration was heaped on me as a vandal, though I only said the University money should be devoted to other channels than the purchase of doubtful MS. I was doing all this, when I was startled by the intelligence that Dr. Groschen had suddenly come to the conclusion that his find was after all only a forgery.

The book of Jasher was a thirteenth century Byzantine forgery, and he ascribed the date at the very earliest to the reign of Alexis Comnenus. Theologians became fierce on the subject. They had seen the MS.; they knew it was genuine. And when Dr. Groschen began to have doubts on Aulus Gellius, suggesting it was a sixteenth century fabrication, the classical world morally and physically rose and denounced him. Dr. Groschen, who had something of the early Christian in his character, bore this shower of opprobrium like a martyr. "I may be mistaken," he said, "but I believe I have been deceived. I have been taken in before, and I would not like the MS. offered to any library before two of the very highest experts could decide as to its authenticity." People had long learnt to regard Dr. Groschen himself as quite the highest expert in the world. They thought he was out of his senses, though the press commended him for his honesty, and one journal, which had been loudest in declaring its authenticity, said it was glad Dr. Groschen had seen the forgery that it had already anticipated.

Dr. Groschen was furthermore asked what experts he would submit his MS. to, and by whose decision he would abide. After some delay and correspondence, he could think of only two—Professor Girdelstone and Mr. Monteagle. “They had had great opportunities,” he said, “of judging on such matters. Their erudition was of a steadier and more solid nature than his was.” Then the world and Oxbridge joined again in a chorus of praise. What could be more honest, more straightforward, than submitting the MS. to a final examination at the hands of the two curators of the FitzTaylor, who were to have the first refusal of the MS. if it was considered authentic. If it was a forgery, and they decided on purchasing, they had themselves to thank. No man was ever given such an opportunity. Professor Girdelstone and his colleague soon came to a conclusion. They decided that there could be no doubt as to the authenticity of the Aulus Gellius. In portions it was true that between the lines certain Greek characters almost obliterated were legible, but this threw no slur on the MS. itself. Of the commentary on the book of Jasher, it will be remembered, they gave no decisive opinion, and it is still an open question; but they expressed their belief that the Aulus Gellius was alone worth the price asked for it by Dr. Groschen. It only remained now for the University to advance a sum to the FitzTaylor for the purchase of this treasure. The curators, rather prematurely perhaps, wrote privately to Dr. Groschen making him an offer for his MS., and paid him half the amount out of their own pockets, so as to close the bargain once and for all.

The delay of the University in making the grant caused a good deal of apprehension in the hearts of

Professor Girdelstone and Mr. Monteagle, and they feared that the enormous sums offered by the Berlin Museum would tempt even the simple-minded Dr. Groschen, though he had the interest of the FitzTaylor so much at heart. These suspicions were unfounded as they were ungenerous. The German *savant* was contented with his degree and college rooms, and showed no hurry for the remainder of the sum to be paid.

One night when I was seated in my rooms, beside the fire, preparing lectures on the ichthyosaurus, I was startled by a knock at my door. It was a hurried jerky rap. I shouted "Come in." The door burst open, and on the threshold I saw Monteagle, with a white face, on which the beads of perspiration glittered. At first I thought it was the rain which had drenched his cap and gown, but in a moment I saw that the perspiration was the result of terror or anxiety (*cf.* my lectures on mental equilibrium). Monteagle and I in our undergraduate days had been friends, but like many University friendships, ours had proved evanescent; our paths had lain in different directions.

He had chosen archæology. We had failed to convert one another to each other's views, and when he became a member of "The Disciples," a mystic Oxbridge society, the fissure between us widened to a gulf. We nodded when we met, but that was all. With Girdelstone I was not on speaking terms. So when I found him on my threshold I confess I was startled.

"May I come in?" he asked.

"Certainly, certainly," I said cordially. "But what is the matter?"

"Good God! Newall," he cried, "that MS. after all is a —— forgery."†

This expression I thought unbecoming in a "disciple," but I only smiled, and said "Really, you think so." Monteagle then made reference to our old friendship, our unfortunate dissension. He asked for my help, and then really excited my pity. Some member of the High Church party in Oxbridge had apparently been to Greece to attend a Conference on the Union of the Greek and Anglican Churches. While there he had met Sarpedon, Patriarch of Hermaphroditopolis, and in course of conversation told him of the renowned Dr. Groschen. Sarpedon had become distant at the mention of the Doctor's name. He denied all knowledge of the famous letter of introduction, and said the only thing he knew of the Professor was that he was usually supposed to have been the thief who had made off with a large chest of parchments from the monastery of St. Basil.

The Greek Patriarch refused to give us any further information. The English clergyman had reported this privately to Girdelstone.

Dr. Groschen's other letters were examined, and had been found to be all fabrications. The book of Jasher and Aulus Gellius had been submitted to a like scrutiny, and Girdelstone and Monteagle had reluctantly come to the conclusion that they were also vulgar and palpable forgeries. At the end of his story Monteagle almost burst into tears. I endeavoured to cheer him, although I was shrieking with laughter at the whole situation.

Of course it was dreadful for him. If he exposed Dr. Groschen, his own reputation as an expert would be gone, and the Dr. already had half the money, which Girdelstone and he had paid in advance. Monteagle was so agitated that it was with difficulty I could get

his story out of him, and to this day I have never quiet learned the truth. Controlling my laughter, I sent a note round to Professor Girdelstone, asking him to come to my rooms. In about ten minutes he appeared, looking as draggled and sheepish as poor Monteagle. In his bosom he carried the fateful MS., which I had never seen before. If it was a forgery (and I am not sure now that it was) it was certainly a masterpiece. From what Girdelstone said to me, then and since, I think that the Aulus Gellius portion was genuine enough, and the book of Jasher the invention of Groschen; however, it will never be discovered if one or neither were genuine. Monteagle thought the ink that was used was a compound of tea and charcoal, but both he and Girdelstone were too suspicious to believe even each other by this time.

I tried to console them, and promised all help in my power. They were rather startled and alarmed when I laid out my basis of operations. In the first place, I was to withdraw all opposition to the purchase of the MS. Girdelstone and Monteagle, meanwhile, were to set about having the Aulus Gellius printed and facsimiled; for I thought it was a pity such work should be lost to the world. The facsimile was *only* to be *announced*, but the publishing by the University Press to be got in hand at once. The text of Aulus Gellius can still be obtained, and a translation of those portions which can be rendered into English, forms a volume of Mr. Bohn's excellent classical library, which will satisfy the curious who are unacquainted with Latin. Professor Girdelstone was to write a preface in very guarded terms. This will be familiar to all classical scholars.

It was with great difficulty that I could persuade

Girdelstone and Monteagle, who had come to me, their enemy, and in distress, of the sincerity of my actions, but the poor fellows were ready to catch at any straw for hope from exposure, and they listened to every word I said. As the whole University knew I was not on speaking terms with Girdelstone, I told him to adopt a Nicodemus-like attitude, and to come to me in the night-time, when we could hold consultation. To the outer world, during these anxious evenings, when my outing was spoiled, and I would see no one, I was supposed to be preparing my great syllabus of lectures on the ichthyosaurus. I only communicated to my fellow curators my plans bit by bit, for I thought it would be better for their nerves. I made Monteagle send round a notice to the press:—"That the MS. about to become the property of the University Museum was being edited and facsimiled and published, and at the earliest possible date it would be on view in the Galleries where Dr. Groschen's collections are now exhibited." This was to quiet the complaints that already were being made by scholars and commentators of the difficulty of examining the MSS. The importunities of several religious societies to get a sight of the book of Jasher became intolerable. The Dean of Rothbury, an old friend of Girdelstone's, came from the north on purpose to examine the new found work. With permission he intended, he said, to write a small brochure for the S.P.C.K. on the book of Jasher, though I believe that he also had some curiosity in the Aulus Gellius, but I may be wronging him. The subterfuges, lies, and devices to which we resorted were not very creditable to ourselves. Girdelstone gave him a dinner, and Monteagle and I persuaded the Senate to confer on

him an honorary degree. We amused him with advance sheets of the commentary, and with assurances that he would be the first to examine the MS. He was quite a month at Oxbridge, but at last was called on business to the north by some lucky domestic family bereavement. Our next difficulty was the news that Sarpedon, Patriarch of Hermaphroditopolis, was about to visit England to attend an Anglican Synod. I thought Girdelstone would go off his head, and Monteagle's hair had already become grey in the last few days. Sarpedon was sure to be invited to Oxbridge. He would meet Dr. Groschen, and then expose him. Our fears, I soon found out, were shared by the German *savant*, who left shortly after news of the advent of Sarpedon, on one of those mysterious visits to the East. I saw that our action at once must be prompt, or Girdelstone and Monteagle would be lost. They were horrified when I told them I proposed placing the MS. to public view in the museum on the following day. A large plate-glass case had been made by my orders, and Girdelstone and Monteagle, who obeyed me like lambs, deposited their precious burden as I told them in the Groschen Hall of the FitzTaylor. The crush that afternoon was terrible. All the University came to peer into the glass case at the new acquisition. I must tell you that Dr. Groschen's antiquities had been placed temporarily in a fire-proof erection built of wood and tin, at the back of the museum, where they were waiting for room in the body of the museum. This erection was connected with the building by a long stone gallery, along which were placed plaster casts.

I mingled with the crowd, and heard the remarks, but I advised Girdelstone and Monteagle to keep out

of the way, as it would only upset them. Various dons came up and chaffed me about the opposition I had made to the MS. being purchased, and a little man of dark, sallow complexion came up and asked me if I was Professor Girdelstone. I said I had not the honour. He wanted to obtain leave to examine the MS. I gave him my card, and asked him to call on me, when I would arrange a day. He told me he was a Lutheran pastor from Bohemia.

I was the last to leave the museum that day. I was often kept in the library long after four, when the museum usually closed, and so I dismissed the attendants when they had locked up everything with the exception of a small door in the stone gallery which I usually used on such occasions. I waited till six in the evening, and as I went out I opened near this door a sash window and removed the iron shutters. After dinner I went round to Monteagle's rooms. He and Girdelstone were sitting in a despondent way on each side of the fire, sipping weak coffee and nibbling Albert biscuits. They were startled at my entrance.

"What *have* you decided?" asked Girdelstone, hoarsely.

"All is arranged. Monteagle and I will set fire to the museum to-night," I said, quietly.

Girdelstone buried his face in his hands and began to sob.

"Anything but that—anything but that!" he cried. And Monteagle turned a little pale. At first they protested, but I overcame their scruples by saying they might get out of the mess how they liked. I advised Girdelstone to go to bed and plead illness for the next few days, for he really wanted rest. At eleven o'clock

that night Monteagle and myself crossed the meadows at the back of our college, and by a circuitous route reached the grounds surrounding the museum, which were planted with rhododendrons and other shrubs. It was pouring with rain, unfortunately not favourable for our enterprise. I had brought with me a small box of combustibles from the University Laboratories, and a dark lantern. When we climbed over the low wall not far from the stone gallery I saw to my horror a light emerging from the Groschen Hall. Monteagle, who is fearfully superstitious, began chattering his teeth. When we reached the small door I saw it was open. A thief had evidently forstalled us. Monteagle suggested going back, and leaving the thief to make off with the MS.; but I would not hear of such a proposal.

The door opening to the Groschen Hall at the end of the gallery was open, and beyond, a man—who had his back towards us, and who I at once recognised as the little Lutheran—was busily engaged in picking the lock of the case where were deposited the book of Jasher and Aulus Gellius. Telling Monteagle to guard the door, I approached very softly, keeping behind the plaster casts. I was within a yard of the man before he heard my boots creak. Then he turned round, and I found myself face to face with Dr. Groschen. I have never seen such a look of terror on anyone's face before.

"You scoundrel!" I cried, collecting myself, "drop those things at once!" and I made for him with my fist. He dodged me. I ran after him; but he threaded his way like a rat through the statues and cases of antiquities, and bolted down the passage out of the door, where he upset Monteagle and the lantern, and disappeared in the darkness and rain. I then returned to

the scene of his labours. Monteagle was too frightened, as the museum had rather a ghostly appearance by the light of the feeble oil lamp. There was some dry sacking in a small cupboard. I had deposited it there for the purpose. This I ignited along with some native curiosities of straw and skin and wickerwork.

There were also some new unpacked cases of casts which the attendants had left there in the afternoon, which materially assisted the conflagration.

It was an impressive scene as the flames played round the pedestals of the torsos, statues, and cases, but I only waited for a few moments to see that my work was complete. I shut the door between the gallery and the hall, so as to avoid the possibility of the fire spreading to the rest of the building. I seized Monteagle by the arm and hurried him through the rhododendrons, over the wall, into the meadows stretching down to the river. I turned back once, and just caught a glimpse of red flame bursting through the windows. Having seen Monteagle half way back to the college, I returned to see if any alarm had been given. Some passers by had already noticed it, and a small crowd had collected in front. A fire engine had been sent for, while a local pump had almost been set going. I returned to my college gate, where I found the porter was standing, believing I had been in Trinity all the evening.

"The FitzTaylor is burning," he said. "I have been looking out for you, sir."

* * * * *

There is nothing more to tell. To this day no one suspects but that the fire was the work of an incendiary, jealous of Dr. Groschen's discovery. The

Professor has returned from the East, but lives in great retirement, and his friends say that he has never quite recovered the shock occasioned by the loss of his collection. The rest of the museum was uninjured.

The death of Sarpedon, Patriarch of Hermaphroditopolis, at Naples, was a sudden and melancholy catastrophe, which people say affected Dr. Groschen more than the fire. Strangely enough he had just been dining with the Doctor the evening before, for they had met at Naples purposely to bury the hatchet.

Sometimes I ask myself if I did right in setting fire to the museum. You see, it was for the sake of others, not myself, and Monteagle was an old friend.

R.

A FRIEND.

ALL, that he came to give,
He gave, and went again :
I have seen one man live,
I have seen one man reign,
With all the graces in his train.

As one of us, he wrought
Things of the common hour :
Whence was the charmed soul brought,
That gave each act such power ;
The natural beauty of a flower ?

Magnificence and grace,
Excellent courtesy :
A brightness on the face,
Airs of high memory :
Whence came all these, to such as he ?

Like young Shakespearian kings,
He won the adoring throng :
And, as Apollo sings,
He triumphed with a song :
Triumphed, and sang, and passed along.

With a light word, he took
The hearts of men in thrall :
And, with a golden look,
Welcomed them, at his call
Giving their love, their strength, their all.

No man less proud than he,
Nor cared for homage less :
Only, he could not be
Far off from happiness :
Nature was bound to his success.

Weary, the cares, the jars,
The lets, of every day :
But the heavens filled with stars,
Chanced he upon the way :
And where he stayed, all joy would stay.

Now, when sad night draws down,
When the austere stars burn :
Roaming the vast, live town,
My thoughts and memories yearn
Toward him, who never will return.

Yet have I seen him live,
And owned my friend, a king :
All that he came to give,
He gave : and I, who sing
His praise, bring all I have to bring.

LIONEL JOHNSON.

SALOMÉ : A CRITICAL REVIEW.

THERE are many forms of criticism which are unsatisfactory from many points of view. There is a form of criticism which proceeds from the critic who ignores the intention and the meaning of the artist, the critic who has something to say and means to say it, and uses the thing criticised for his purpose, either in support of his own theory, or as an example of the failure of that which offends against his own theory, completely ignoring the real intention and end of the artist whose work he is criticising, and in some cases deliberately giving a false account of what the artist has actually said or done. This is unsatisfactory from the point of view of the artist for obvious reasons, it is unsatisfactory to the general reader who decides whether a book is or is not worth reading or a picture worth seeing by what the critic says, and who expects to gather a more or less accurate account of the contents of a book or the appearance of a picture by reading a criticism of it. To the critic it is no doubt perfectly satisfactory ; at least we may hope so, for it will be hard if no one is satisfied. This critic is of the impressionist type, the thing he is criticising varies with his moods ; just as to the impressionist painter the

colour of grass is now blue, now violet, now bright red, and sometimes, though rarely, green.

Another and very common form of unsatisfactory criticism is that emanating from the critic whose ideas as to legitimate or wholesome subject matter are pronounced and limited. He is apt to ask questions, which he answers himself, implying that they admit of but one answer. "Do we want to see represented on the stage the character of a woman who is faithless to her husband?" or "Would it not have been better for Lord Dash to have frankly explained the whole affair to his wife at once?" he asks, with a forcible *num* or *nonne* at the end of his sentence. He is very trying.

But perhaps the most unsatisfactory criticism of all is that which emanates from the critic who has not seen, touched, or heard, or, in short, apprehended by any sense the thing which is the object of his attack; I say attack advisedly, for this sort of critic always attacks.

Mr. Oscar Wilde's one act French tragedy *Salomé* has received the charge of all these forms of criticism, that of the last of the three to an extraordinary extent. That mouthpiece of Philistinism, the daily press, surpassed itself in the stern and indignant condemnation of the book which it had not read and the play which it had not seen; never before it declared had such an outrage on decency and good taste been committed, never had a more infamous plot against morality and the Bible been nipped in the bud. For it *was* nipped in the bud, the censor had refused to license its production, England was saved from lasting disgrace. The daily press positively swelled with pride, it metaphorically slapped its chest and thanked God it was an

Englishman. It is hard to understand the attitude taken up by the anonymous scribblers who propounded these pompous absurdities. Why it should be taken for granted that because a writer takes his subject from a sublime and splendid literature, he should necessarily treat it in a contemptible manner, is a mystery it is hard to solve. Apparently it never occurred to these enlightened beings that the very sublimity and grandeur of such a subject would be a sufficient guarantee that the artist had put his very best work into it, and had done his utmost to exalt his treatment to the high level his subject demanded. To a man who takes for the scene of a vulgar farce, the back drawing-room of a house in Bloomsbury, and who brings on to the stage a swindling stockbroker or a rag-and-bone merchant, they are ready to listen with delighted attention, to laugh at his coarse jokes and revel in his cockney dialogue; good healthy English fun they call it. But a man who actually takes for the scene of a tragedy the gorgeous background of a Roman Tetrarch's court, and who brings on to the stage a real prophet out of the Bible, and all in French too! "No, it is too much," they say, "we don't want to hear anything more about it, it is an outrage and an infamy." O Happy England, land of healthy sentiment, roast beef and Bible, long may you have such men to keep guard over your morals, to point out to you the true path, and to guide your feet into the way of cant!

One word to the appreciative but journalistic critic. It is refreshing to find that he exists, but it is a pity that he is journalistic. The Tragedy of *Salomé* is written in French, and the appreciative journalist translates. It is surely a little hard on the author who

writes "Iokanaan, Iokanaan, je suis amoureuse de ta bouche," when the appreciative journalist translates "John, John, I like your mouth." But let that pass, he means well.

The scene on which the tragedy is enacted is a terrace of Herod's palace fronting the banqueting hall; a huge staircase leads down from the palace on one side, and on the other side is an ancient cistern walled in with a wall of green bronze, and in this cistern Iokanaan is immured. The young Syrian, captain of the guard, the page of Herodias, and the soldiers of the guard are standing or reclining about the terrace; within Herod and "those that sit at meat with him" are feasting. The note of tragedy is struck at the very beginning. There is a sort of ominous dead calm in the air, the soldiers are talking in low voices to one another; the young Syrian is gazing at Salomé, who sits within at the feast. "Comme la Princesse Salomé est belle ce soir!" he iterates again and again, till the page of Herodias, who has seen tragedy in the moon's strange face, rebukes him. "Vous la regardez trop. Il ne faut pas regarder les gens de cette façon . . . il peut arriver un malheur." But the young Syrian looks still. How like the monotonous reiteration of one short note at the beginning of a great symphony of music are the low spoken remarks of the soldiers.

Premier Soldat. Le Tetrarque a l'air sombre.

Second Soldat. Oui il a l'air sombre.

Premier Soldat. Il regarde quelque chose.

Second Soldat. Il regarde quelqu'un.

Premier Soldat. Qui regarde-t'il?

Second Soldat. Je ne sais pas.

Herod is looking, as the young Syrian is looking, at

Salomé, and the soldiers talk on, and anon the voice of Iokanaan comes up from the great cistern. Presently the Princess comes out, and the voice of Iokanaan is heard again. The Princess bids them bring him out that she may see him. He is brought out, and she stares in wonder at him, as he pours out words of denunciation and warning. She is first repelled, then attracted; he is beautiful, this prophet, but his eyes are terrible, "on dirait des lacs noirs troublés par des lunes fantastiques." She looks longer, and the prophet sees her looking and is wrath. The young Syrian begs her to go despairingly. But she is infatuated, now it is his hair, now his eyes, that she is amorous of, and now his mouth. "Laisse moi baiser ta bouche Iokanaan," she says, and the young Syrian her lover kills himself at her feet, but she does not even see him. Very touching and beautiful is the lament of the page over his dead friend. "Il était mon frère, et plus proche qu'un frère. Je lui ai donné une petite boîte qui contenait des parfums et une bague d'agate qu'il portait toujours à la main. Le soir nous nous promenions au bord de la rivière et parmi les amandiers et il me racontait des choses de son pays. Il parlait toujours très bas. Le son de sa voix ressemblait au son de la flûte d'un joueur de flûte. Aussi il aimait beaucoup à se regarder dans la rivière. Je lui ai fait, des reproches pour cela." Then Herod comes out with Herodias, and still he looks lasciviously at Salomé. Herod is the fox of the gospel, he has the cunning and the superstition of the tyrant who tries as it were to keep on good terms with the gods, he will not hear Iokanaan spoken lightly of, perhaps he has talked with God he says, it is not safe to treat him with contempt, he is afraid.

And now he begs Salomé to dance for him, but she is unwilling; and he makes the fatal promise to give her what she wills if she will but dance, and Salomé dances the dance of the Seven Veils, and claims Iokanaan's head on a silver charger. Herod tries in vain to turn her from her choice, he offers her the great emerald that Cæsar has given him, his white peacocks, his jewels, his treasures, the very veil of the sanctuary itself. But she is obdurate, and he yields. The order is given, and soon a huge black arm bearing a silver charger with the head of Iokanaan is thrust up from the cistern. Salomé takes the charger and apostrophises the head, triumphantly, mockingly, bitterly. "Tu n'as pas voulu de moi Iokanaan. Tu m'as rejetée. Tu m'as dit des choses infâmes. . . . Mais toi tu es mort, ta tête m'appartient, je puis en faire ce que je veux." Herod is repelled. "Elle est monstrueuse ta fille, elle est tout à fait monstrueuse," he says to Herodias. Then he becomes filled with horror, he shudders, and fear comes over him. "Eteignez les flambeaux," he cries, "je ne veux pas regarder les choses, je ne veux pas que les choses me regardent. Eteignez les flambeaux. Cachez la lune! Cachez les étoiles! Cachons nous dans notre palais Hérodiad. Je commence à avoir peur." The stage is immediately plunged in darkness, the slaves put out the torches, a cloud hides the moon, and in the dark the Tetrarch mounts the stairs. Again the voice of Salomé is heard, "Ah! j'ai baisé ta bouche, Iokanaan, j'ai baisé ta bouche, il y avait un âcre saveur sur tes lèvres. Était-ce la saveur du sang? Mais peut-être est-ce la saveur de l'amour. On dit que l'amour a un âcre saveur. Mais qu'importe? Qu'importe? J'ai baisé ta bouche

Iokanaan, j'ai baisé ta bouche." Suddenly a ray of moonlight falls and illumines Salomé, and as Herod turns he sees her and cries, "Tuez cette femme!" And the soldiers crush her under their shields. Such very briefly is the outline of this lurid tragedy.

One thing strikes one very forcibly in the treatment, the musical form of it. Again and again it seems to one that in reading one is *listening*; listening, not to the author, not to the direct unfolding of a plot, but to the tones of different instruments, suggesting, suggesting, always indirectly, till one feels that by shutting one's eyes one can best catch the suggestion. The author's personality nowhere shews itself.

The French is as much Mr. Wilde's own as is the psychological motive of the play, it is perfect in scholarship, but it takes a form new in French literature. It is a daring experiment and a complete success. The language is rich and coloured, but never precious, and shows a command of expression so full and varied that the ascetically artistic restraint of certain passages stands out in strong relief. Such a passage is the one quoted above: the conversation of the soldiers on the terrace; in which by-the-bye certain intelligent critics have discovered a resemblance to Ollendorf, and with extraordinary shallowness and lack of artistic sensibility have waxed facetious over. O wonderful men!

Artistically speaking the play would gain nothing by performance, to my mind it would lose much. To be appreciated it must be abstracted, and to be abstracted it must be read. Let it, "not to the sensual ear but more endeared, pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone."

It only remains to say that the treatment of St. John the Baptist is perfectly refined and reverend.

I suppose the play is unhealthy, morbid, unwholesome, and un-English, ça va sans dire. It is certainly un-English, because it is written in French, and therefore unwholesome to the average Englishman, who can't digest French. It is probably morbid and unhealthy, for there is no representation of quiet domestic life, nobody slaps anybody else on the back all through the play, and there is not a single reference to roast beef from one end of the dialogue to the other, and though it is true that there is a reference to Christianity, there are no muscular Christians. Anyone, therefore, who suffers from that most appalling and widespread of diseases which takes the form of a morbid desire for health had better avoid and flee from *Salomé*, or they will surely get a shock that it will take months of the daily papers and Charles Kingsley's novels to counteract. But the less violently and aggressively healthy, those who are healthy to live and do not live to be healthy, will find in Mr. Oscar Wilde's tragedy the beauty of a perfect work of art, a joy for ever, ambrosia to feed their souls with honey of sweet-bitter thoughts.

ALFRED DOUGLAS.

T'AMO.

T'AMO nell 'ora quando l'alba spunta,
Allor che tutto il cielo ancora dorme,
E aspettando la nascita del giorno
Languidamente brillano le stelle.

T'amo del mezzodì nell 'ora piena
Quando ha potenza realmente il sole,
Allor che svengon anelanti i fiori
E spandon all' intorno ogni fraganza.

T'amo nella tranquill 'ora di sera
Quando del giorno finit' è la pena,
E gli augelletti nel frondoso bosco
Al sol che muore cantano l'addio.

Più t'amo ancora nella mezza-notte
Quando regnando la quiete sovrana
Posso cullarmi in dolce ricordanza
D'un amore per sempre, ahimé! finito . . .

Ah sí! nel giorno e nella notte io t'amo,
Io t'amo, Amore, e sempre io t'amo e sempre,
E vivo sol nell' estasi beata
Con te sol bear mi nell' Eternità.

H. SOMERSET.

CONCERNING RULERS.

I WENT down yesterday to the Isis with Glaucon to see the practice of the rowers. When we were now close to the place of the triremes we were met by Adeimantus and Polemarchus, who were coming towards us, apparently coming away from the very place we were bound for. Polemarchus immediately began: "Socrates, if I am not mistaken, you are on your way to witness the practice of the rowers." "You are right in your conjecture," I replied. "Are you not aware," said he, "that the company of rowers whom you are interested in are not to appear to-day?" "I hear it now for the first time," I replied. "It is true for all that," interposed Adeimantus, "and I shall not be surprised if they do not appear again at all, either to-day or to-morrow, or indeed at any future time." "Pray why do you surmise this?" I enquired. "Because," replied he, "the rulers of their college have compelled three of their number to leave the city." "That is certainly a strong reason," I replied, "but for what offence have they met with this wonderfully severe treatment?" "That I am unable to say accurately," he replied, "but from what I have heard it was some drunken frolic, in the course of which the spirited element in their souls overcame the reasonable element to so great an extent that they lost their hold of the knowledge concerning things which ought and ought not to be respected, and wandered about the college

in a state half way between being and not being, imitating everything without exception, even down to the sounds of pulleys and wheels, the barking of dogs, the bleating of sheep, and the roaring of bulls, nay even the voices and gestures of certain of the rulers themselves, and indeed, if I am not mistaken, this last imitation of theirs was the chief reason why the rulers were so hot against them." "Well," I replied, "if what you say is true, perhaps we ought to blame them for imitating bulls and sheep and pulleys; but for imitating the rulers we ought not to blame them, according at least to my opinion, for a ruler considers the interests of the ruled, and surely it is right to imitate that which considers one's own interest." "It is not right if we are to believe what Anacreon says," interposed Glaucon. "Pray to what saying of Anacreon's do you refer?" I enquired. "That in which he says: 'Away! away! ye men of rules'" replied he. "For if the rulers are to be banished, as he seems to say, we shall not be able to imitate them, at any rate easily, for I imagine it is harder to imitate that which we do not apprehend by any sense, than that which we have constantly before our eyes and in our hearing." "Well," said I, "it is certainly no easy matter to disbelieve Anacreon, for he is a wise and inspired man. But what he means by his words you may understand, but I do not; for surely we shall not consent to believe that he means anything of this sort, for instance, that a state or any body of people should be altogether without rulers." "No we shall certainly not consent to believe that," replied he. "Then it appears that Anacreon means something different from this when he says 'Away! away! ye men of rules'?" "Most cer-

tainly," he replied, "but what it is I am unable to guess, but perhaps you can enlighten me."

"I am not at all confident," said I, "but perhaps he meant something of this kind, that there was something amiss with the rulers of states or colleges, which prevented their working as they ought to, and that a change in the rulers would enable these states or colleges to assume their proper form." "That is very probably what he meant," said Polemarchus, "but pray what is your own opinion, do you think any change would bring about what is required? For I know from what you have said before on many different occasions that you do not consider the present system satisfactory." "Well," I replied, "there is one change by which, as I consider, the required revolution might be brought about; but it is certainly neither a small nor easy one." "What is it?" enquired Glaucon. "Well," said I, "I will say it, even though I pay the penalty of being well laughed at. It is this: unless it somehow comes about that either the scouts secure the ruling power in colleges, or that those who are now called rulers or dons be imbued with the spirit of scouts, there will be no deliverance for colleges from evils." At this Adeimantus replied, "this is certainly a strange statement of yours Socrates, and I am at present at a loss to understand what you mean by it, but I will endeavour to agree with anything you suggest, and I may perhaps in my answers shew a degree of complaisance which will materially assist you in justifying your dictum." "Since you offer me such valuable alliance," said I, "I must make the attempt; and in the first place will you tell me if you think that a man who is the maker of anything may be

justly said to be the artificer, constructor, or manufacturer of that thing?" "He may." "The shoemaker then will be he who constructs or manufactures shoes?" "He will." "And the clockmaker he who constructs or manufactures clocks, the hatmaker hats, and so on with all the other arts." "Certainly." "The bedmaker then will be who constructs or manufactures beds?" "You are perfectly right." "Now answer me this. Do you remember that on a former occasion we agreed that there were three sorts of beds, of which one existing in the nature of things we agreed to attribute to the workmanship of God, a second we agreed to attribute to the upholsterer, and a third to the painter?" "I remember it very well," he said, "and we attributed them rightly." "Very well then," said I. "We agreed that God made a bed?" "We did." "And did not we just now agree that he who makes a bed is a bedmaker?" "We did so rightly." "Then God it appears is a sort of bedmaker?" "Apparently," he said. "Now do you admit that two people living in different places, but performing the same function under the same conditions, may be said to have a common function?" "I do." "And to a common function we apply a common name?" "We do." "Then a man living in Athens who makes boots has the same function as a man who makes boots at Corinth under the same circumstances?" "Obviously." "And although in Athens he may be called a bootmaker and at Corinth a cobbler, his function being essentially the same, this will make no difference; but the terms are identical and interchangeable, since they indicate identical things, and as far as correct nomenclature goes he may be spoken of in both places as a cobbler or in both places as a bootmaker, or in

either as one or the other, and so on." "You are perfectly right," he said.

"Are you aware then that what is called a scout at Oxford is at Cambridge called a bedmaker, and that the functions and circumstances of the two are identical?"

"I was not aware of it," said he, "but I am quite ready to take your word for it as far as I am concerned."

"Include me in that acquiescence of yours" put in Polemarchus. "And add me also," said Adeimantus."

"Well," I said, "let us agree to take this for granted, on the understanding that if we subsequently find that we were wrong then any conclusion which we come to shall be cancelled. And now I come to think of it we were making a ludicrous difficulty out of nothing." "How so?" enquired Glaucon. "Well," I replied, "we agreed just now that he who makes a bed is a bedmaker did we not?" "We did." "Well," I said, "I believe a scout makes beds every morning; or am I wrong?" "You are perfectly right Socrates," he said. "Well then a scout must be a bedmaker," said I, "and whether at Cambridge he is called a bedmaker or not will make no difference, since he actually is one." "You are right, it will make no difference," said he. "Well then," said I, "if Cambridge men tell us that a scout is not a bedmaker, but a something else, such as a 'gyp,' and if our friend Mulierastes gets excited and tells us that women make beds and not men, we will endeavour not to get angry with him, but will speak to him soothingly in some such way as this: 'My dear Mulierastes you are a charming and wonderful man, and your admiration for women is very creditable to you, but you must allow us sometimes to prefer the other sex both in bed making and in other transactions,

so please do not be angry with us if in this case we differ from you, holding fast to the opinion that men and not women are really bedmakers, and that though women in Oxford or Cambridge may sometimes make beds, yet they do so accidentally, and are not therefore bedmakers in the strict sense at all, any more than they are historians, though they sometimes take firsts in history.' And if he still disbelieves us we will ask him to go to Mr. Froude, who will perhaps be able to convince him. What do you think Glaucon, do you think he will still disbelieve us and be angry with us?" "He will not if he takes my advice," he said, "for it is wrong to disbelieve what is true, or to be angry with those who tell us the truth."

"The scout then is the same as the bedmaker, and is in fact a bedmaker." "He is." "But we agreed just now that God was a sort of bedmaker." "We did." "And a bedmaker is a scout?" "Certainly." "Then it is plain that God is a kind of scout?" "It is plain," he said. "And God is quite perfect?" "He is." "Therefore he partakes in nothing that is not perfect and godlike?" "In nothing," he said. "Everything then that he partakes in is godlike and perfect?" "Certainly." "Then the function of the scout must be something godlike and perfect?" "It must be." "Does not the scout then partake in what is godlike and perfect?" "He does." "And is not he who partakes in anything godlike and perfect, himself also godlike and perfect in so far as he partakes in that thing?" "I think he is." "The scout then, considered as a scout, is godlike and perfect?" "He is." "But are the dons or rulers, considered as such, godlike and perfect?" "By no means," he replied, "and

Tennyson, in my opinion, is right when he couples them with devils, saying 'I never turned my back on don or devil yet,' for truly they are very devilish." "They are," said I, "but can we, after the conclusion we have come to, have any more doubt as to who should rule in a college, or is it not obvious to anyone that those who are godlike and perfect should rule, rather than those who are the opposite of this, even if they are not altogether devilish?" "It is impossible," he said, "to have any doubt, it is plain that the scouts ought to rule." "You are quite right," said I, "and though no doubt the wits will make jokes about us and think of us as visionary dreamers and altogether mad, we will not mind their laughter, but will rather consider that we ought to pity their ignorance and grieve that they should laugh at what they do not understand." "You are quite right," said he. "We were then, it seems, not far wrong when we conjectured just now that what Anacreon meant by those words would turn out to be something of this sort: that not these present ones but some other kind of rulers ought to rule; and that so far from wishing to be without rulers at all he wished only to have better and stronger rulers." "We were perfectly right, Socrates," he said, "but we must be going home now if you wish to enter the college gates with me, for I remember that the doorkeeper of our college has the character of a good guardian, and while, in addition to being swift of foot and strong, he is able to recognize his friends when he sees them, to strangers he is fierce and hostile." "Let us go then by all means," said I, and we all returned together.

ALFRED DOUGLAS.

“MEN AND WOMEN WHO WRITE.”

SINCE it was first declared that “the style is the man” many a man has been discussing the proposition. Like astrology in old times, and like palmistry and phrenology in these, the dogma stimulates the chief interest of men, their interest in themselves. It is, therefore, like the black arts of the ancients, and like the white artifices of the moderns, a proposition of perennial concern. For the same reason, it has hitherto, in the fugitive literature of it, been one of autobiographic concern. Essayists on the theory have naturally been so anxious to see how it looks in relation to themselves that their pronouncements have been really chapters of personal reminiscence. That is deplorable in the interests of science. If people could see themselves as others see them, things would be all right. A.K.H.B. would put the essays on the subject into “volume form,” avowing that he had not edited the punctuation; and then you would have the theory tested with exhaustiveness and despatch. Unfortunately, however, people do not see themselves as they are seen; and the discourses are merely so many *obiter dicta* crying in wildernesses of introspection.

Now, to compare ladies and gentlemen of letters with their styles of expression in literature is undoubted cheek; but, after all, it is no worse than any of the

illustrious people testing theories in science by reference to themselves; and so, as the matter has become one of public interest, we may reassure ourselves against the feeling that we shall be outraging any person, or any principle, in offering a few examples of the true method.

Place aux dames, of course. Only, O ——! there are not many *places* to be allotted. When you come to think of it, the Woman's Movement is still, as regards letters, in its infancy. There have never been, in that matter, any man-made laws against which Woman has had to struggle in her desire for Emancipation; yet she has not emancipated herself in any quantity. We speak of the present. At this moment "the Women who Write," and write well enough to be written about, are a grievous few. They are so few, and as a rule so grievous, that one is tempted to doubt the assumption underlying the Woman's Movement. If she hasn't emancipated herself where no male things sought to hold her in, how are we to believe that she is fit to be where they do not want her? However, that is not the point. The point is that ladies of literary eminence are very few. This, as we have remarked, is annoying; but it simplifies matters in one respect. It is easier to come to a generalization when the items you have to survey are few than it is when they are many. It is specially easy in the present case; for in one sense all literary ladies are the same. The saying that the style is the man hits them off with few exceptions. It does so, at any rate, in so far as we have the pleasure of their acquaintance.

Mrs. Clifford, for example, the most distinguished lady novelist of the day, speaks to you exactly as her books speak. There is in her talk the same fluent

accuracy, the same unerring movement to the point, the same epigrammatic unpremeditation, which you find in her stories. She is all emotion, too, and metaphysical; but her emotion and her metaphysics are pleasing and impressive, for, unlike most women with the same interests, Mrs. Clifford, in her writings, and in her self, is candid, earnest, in no measure a superior person. The same may be said of Mrs. Arthur Kennard. Only, she personally is more charming than her works. She, too, in her writings, which hitherto have been mostly in *The National Review*, *The Quarterly*, and *The Nineteenth Century*, is swayed by what Mr. Courthope has called the Liberal Movement in letters (which, paradoxically, makes for Toryism in politics); and her talk is quickened by the same influence. There is, however, a difference between herself and her writings. Her writings seem deadly earnest. They give you the impression that she is sure of everything she says in them; but when you drink tea with her you are charmed to discover that she takes her own Voltaireism as lightly as her master took the conventionalities himself arose to riddle. Charmed, we repeat; for 'twere indeed depressing if lovely woman were as decided in her unbelief, her Liberalism at large, as she sometimes thinks she is. Mrs. Kennard's essays and herself are identical in that both of them give you an assurance the very opposite of that which they seemed concerned to convey. Mrs. Kennard, we see, has a novel in the press. It is sure to be good if she has not overweighted it with academic lore or clouded it with the fog of echoed scepticism. Mrs. Lynn Linton is another of the ladies who are of a piece with their works. She is full of emphasis bordering on ferocity. We

allude, of course, to her polemical doings. Her novels, the works in which she deals with humanity in general, are bright, humane, tolerant; and so is herself; but it is in her articles that she is most serious now, and in these, as in herself when the girl of the period swims into her ken, she is the most virile lady in the land. This is odd, seeing that her mission is to show that women should be womanly: a warning against giving yourself over to one idea. Mrs. Humphry Ward is a warning too. Her gentle face has a haunted look: she seems beset by the spectres of the decadent prigs with whom she has peopled the realms of empirical philosophy—particularly with that of the grievous David. Mrs. Ward will rank not far below George Eliot when she wakes up to the fact that young people anxious about the souls which they think they don't possess are material for the Salvation Army, rather than for literature. If the young people were frankly profligate, as they would have been in the Restoration time, it would not be so bad; but the religious instinct and the other make an evil and uninteresting mixture. When she realises this Mrs. Ward will cease to be haunted. She will be reconciled to herself, to the world, and to her pen. Lady Lindsay, Mrs. Stannard, Mrs. Edward Kennard, and Mrs. Laffan are all to be known through their novels; also Miss Olive Shreiner and the authoress of *Some Emotions and a Moral*. All of them take literature seriously; their own especially so. Miss Marie Corelli is in similar case; but we are afraid to say more about her. Of the literary ladies who are exceptions to the rule that "Women who Write" are in strict accord with their writings, only two instances occur at this moment. These are Lady Jeune and Mrs. Mona Caird, who are

among the most charming women of our acquaintance. To read Lady Jeune, you would think her severe and puritanic in the extreme: embodiment of the spirit of all the Covenanters. She is the very opposite; yet it must not be supposed that either herself or her social essays are disingenuous. She is thoroughly in earnest when she takes pen in hand to write a few words to *The North American Review* or to *The National*; but, unlike most literary ladies, she knows that the Thoughtful Person, especially if it be a woman, is not seemly, not effectual, in real life; and is wisely as bright as a butterfly. Similarly, whosoever is introduced to Mrs. Mona Caird in fear and trembling suffers without cause. She is as gentle and winning as Mrs. Lynn Linton would always be if the girl of the period would be kind enough to depart this life. You could not imagine anyone less fitted to suppose that marriage could possibly be a failure.

After the ladies the bards; and first of the bards Mr. Wilde, because Mr. Wilde is very feminine. That is the first impression—your impression when under the spell of his soft manners, his coy intonations, his frank acquiescence in your knowledge that he is a poet. (There is only another poet among our acquaintances who is not inclined to derogate the idea). Still, Mr. Wilde is manly enough at heart. You will find that out for yourself if, happening to talk politics with him, you express any doubt as to whether his countrymen would fight for England if we chanced to be landed in a war. Then who shall say there is not a very manly tone throughout *Lady Windermere's Fan*? (We won't mention *Dorian Gray*). It is a tone of cynical manliness, no doubt; but that, in these days, is not an

unhealthy symptom. Cynicism was never yet known to be real, and in Mr. Wilde's case it is very unreal indeed. Still, it is not useless. There are two unrealities in the mental attitudes in which men and women hold themselves towards life. There is the unreality of the belief that humanity is so desperately wicked that it behoves us to envelop ourselves, by way of example, in a High Moral Tone; also there is the unreality of modern cynicism, which exaggerates the virtue of men and women at large in order that we may be rid for a time of the self-imposed and rather impious duty of being avowedly moral. The worst we can say of Mr. Wilde is that he has wholly abandoned himself to the mood of the hour; the best, that there has never been any mood of the hour which has not had some spirit of good in it—which is, perhaps, an unanswerable justification. Mr. Swinburne you would never know to be a poet at all. He will talk to you about swimming, Home Rule, sport, scholarship (his, perhaps, is the widest scholarship in England)—anything but poetry, at least his own;—and a most charming companion he is—urbane and bright; and modest to a degree which makes you wonder, in shame, what on earth you are doing in his presence. Lord Lytton was a man of the same type: only, he, who had (as it were) a wider manner of the world, was not so much afflicted with reserve about himself. Like Lord Beaconsfield—"I too am a gentlemen of the Press," he said; "and I wear no prouder escutcheon."—Lord Salisbury seems to remember that first of all he is a man of letters. He chats very happily about his *Saturday Review* days; and is no wise concerned to dispute the (borrowed) estimate of the Nonconformist Conscience, that he is "a master

of flouts and jeers." Many things in this age are none the worse for a flouting and a jeering; and men of letters, as distinct from "Men and Women who Write," are the men to do it. Mr. William Watson has been indisposed so long that it would be rash to estimate him with much assurance; but he too, from what we know of him, resembles most great poets in being a manly fellow first, and a singer (as it were) casually. Mr. Theodore Watts is not unconscious that he is skilled in the building of a sonnet; but neither does he, in private life, seem primarily a poet. There is no practical affair in which he is not interested, and, so far as we have seen, none in which he is not able to instruct you. Of Mr. Alfred Austin we could write a volume without exhausting the subject. He is even more poetical than his lyrics—which is saying much. Like Mr. Wilde, he has a good deal of the woman in his manner; but there is no lack of virility under his pretty ways. Of him more than of any other bard now among us, it may be said that the poetry is the man. He is as open as April in *Fortunatus*, and as delightful in his candour. We are unacquainted with Mr. William Morris and Mr. Lewis Morris. Apart from them, all the poets, it is notable, are Tories—very high Tories indeed.

If we were to call the roll of the men prose-writers, this paper would fill *The Spirit Lamp* for two or three numbers. Besides, to hop from the bards to the prosaists were an anti-climax. Suffice it to say that all the men novelists of our acquaintance—Mr. Blackmore, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Mallock, Mr. Black, Mr. Julian Sturgis, Mr. Charles Eden, Mr. Besant, Mr. Rider Haggard, Mr. Barrie, Mr. Kipling, Mr. Gilbert Parker, Mr. Hall

Caine—are (with a possible exception in the case of Mr. Caine) very unlike “Men who Write” in their personal manners; and that the same may be said of Mr. Edmund Gosse (partly), Mr. Andrew Lang (with emphasis), Mr. Churton Collins, Mr. Augustine Birrell, Mr. Kebbel, Mr. Frederick Greenwood, Mr. Courthope, and other essayists; as well as of all the able editors, most notably Mr. Walter Pollock, Mr. Henley, Mr. Sidney Low, Mr. Hutton, Mr. Townsend, and Mr. Cust.

In short, whilst the aphorism that “the style is the man” is applicable to almost all the “Women who Write,” it is inapplicable to nearly all the men; but it is so only in a certain sense. It is inapplicable to them as men of the world, because, unlike women, men, in their commerce with society, are apt to be in terror lest they should be regarded as notabilities, and inclined to be ashamed of earnestness of any kind. This is true despite the fact that in some cases fellows of frivolous manners are seriously philosophic, and even religious, in their books, and that in other cases there is what Mr. Quiller Couch calls a “Come!-wade-with-me-in-gore” tone in the novels of youths whose manners are mild and chest-measurements small. In these cases, the style, if it be not quite the man, is the man as he would like to be: which, if we had two more pages at our disposal, we could show to be pretty much the same thing.

FLÂNEUR.

IN MEMORIAM

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS died at Rome on Wednesday, April 19th, after an attack of pneumonia that lasted only two days.

It is not necessary here to make any detailed reference to his life and literary work. Suffice it to say that the world has lost in him a sweet poet, and a biographer, translator, and essayist, as learned, as graceful, and as brilliant as any that it has ever known. Only those who knew him can realize what a friend and what a man he was. A man of a kindlier heart or a sweeter nature has never lived.

It is only three months since, drawing a bow at a venture, I wrote to John Addington Symonds asking him for a contribution to the *Spirit Lamp*, a request which he complied with by sending the lines "To Leander" (some of the best he ever wrote) which appeared in the February number of this magazine, and a letter of kind encouragement and interest which came like a sunbeam in mid-winter. From that time to this he has been as much to my life as the sun is to a flower, and to read again his last letter written three days before he died, and received on the very day of the announcement of his death in the papers, is like

drinking the last drop of a great well which one had thought would spring for ever in a thirsty land, how thirsty who shall tell seeing how small a way I have walked in it? Alas! too, he had not finished his work, there was more to do; there were chains he might have loosened, and burdens he might have lifted; chains on the limbs of lovers and burdens on the wings of poets. I can say no more. Words, words, words,—what are they? Only I see before me the bleak bare space in the way, and hear in the air the beating of the wings of the angel of Death.

ALFRED DOUGLAS.



SICILIAN LOVE SONG.

WILL the hot sun never die ?
He shines too bright, too long.
How slow the hours creep by !
Will the thrush never finish her song ?
She is singing too merrily.

Oh when will the moon come, pale,
And strange ? I am weary, I wait
For the sad sad nightingale
Ever sobbing insatiate.
Will the day-light never fail ?

Take wings relentless light,
Die quick unlovely sun !
For my love will come with the night
When the dreary day is done.
Come soon ! come soon ! sweet night !

His lips are sweet and red,
Where starlight and moonlight mingle
We will make our bridal bed,
Down in the cool dark dingle,
When the long day is dead.

ALFRED DOUGLAS.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

R.T.—See Notice to Correspondents; you did not send your name and address. Your poems were very nice, but not quite good enough to put in.

A.R.B.—I like your story very much, but I dare not publish it. Your verses are crowded out of this number, but I will put them in my next.—ED.

NOTICE.

The Spirit Lamp will in future appear MONTHLY, price 1/.

All communications, which must be accompanied by the writer's name and address (not necessarily for publication), should be addressed—The Editor, c/o Mr. James Thornton, High Street, Oxford.



The Spirit Lamp.

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THE DISCIPLE.

WHEN Narcissus died the Trees and the Flowers desired to weep for him.

And the Flowers said to the Trees "Let us go to the River and pray it to lend us of its waters, that we may make tears and weep and have our fill of sorrow."

So the Trees and the Flowers went to the River, and the Trees called to the River and said, "We pray thee to lend us of thy waters that we may make tears and weep and have our fill of sorrow."

And the River answered, "Surely ye may have of my waters as ye desire. But wherefore would ye turn my waters, which are waters of laughter, into waters that are waters of pain? And why do ye seek after sorrow?"

And the Flowers answered, "We seek after sorrow because Narcissus is dead."

And when the River heard that Narcissus was dead, it changed from a river of water into a river of tears.

And it cried out to the Trees and the Flowers and said, "Though every drop of my waters is a tear, and I have changed from a river of water into a river of tears, and my waters that

were waters of laughter are now waters of pain, yet can I not lend ye a tear, so loved I Narcissus."

And the Trees and the Flowers were silent, and after a time, the Trees answered and said, "We do not marvel that thou should'st mourn for Narcissus in this manner, so beautiful was he."

And the River said, "But was Narcissus beautiful?"

And the Trees and the Flowers answered, "Who should know that better than thou? Us did he ever pass by, but thee he sought for, and would lie on thy banks and look down at thee, and in the mirror of thy waters he would mirror his own beauty."

And the River answered, "But I loved Narcissus because, as he lay on my banks and looked down at me, in the mirror of his eyes I saw ever my own beauty mirrored. Therefore loved I Narcissus, and therefore must I weep and have my fill of sorrow, nor can I lend thee a tear."

OSCAR WILDE.



IN SUMMER.

THERE were the black pine trees,
And the sullen hills
Frowning, there were pretty trills
Of birds, and the sweet hot sun,
And little rippling rills
Of water, every one
Singing and prattling; there were bees

Honey-laden, tuneful, and a song
Far off, and a timid air
That sighed and kissed my hair,
My hair that the hot sun loves:
The day was very fair,
There was wooing of doves,
And the shadows were not yet long.

And I lay on the soft green grass,
And the smell of the earth was sweet:
And I dipped my naked feet
In the little stream, and was cool,
As a flower is cool in the heat.
And the day lay still in a dream,
And the hours forgot to pass.

And you came, my love, so stealthily
That I saw you not
Till I felt that your arms were hot
Round my neck, and my lips were wet
With your lips; I had forgot
How sweet you were: and lo! the sun had set,
And the pale moon came up silently.

ALFRED DOUGLAS.

“THE OTHER SIDE.”

A BRETON LEGEND.

A la joyouse Messe noire.

“NOT that I like it, but one does feel so much better after it—oh, thank you, Mère Yvonne, yes just a little drop more.” So the old crones fell to drinking their hot brandy and water (although of course they only took it medicinally, as a remedy for their rheumatics), all seated round the big fire and Mère Pinquele continued her story.

“Oh, yes, then when they get to the top of the hill, there is an altar with six candles quite black and a sort of something in between, that nobody sees quite clearly, and the old black ram with the man’s face and long horns begins to say Mass in a sort of gibberish nobody understands, and two black strange things like monkeys glide about with the book and the cruets—and there’s music too, such music. There are things the top half like black cats, and the bottom part like men only their legs are all covered with close black hair, and they play on the bag-pipes, and when they come to the elevation, then——” Amid the old crones there was lying on the hearth-rug, before the fire, a boy, whose large lovely eyes dilated and whose limbs quivered in the very ecstasy of terror.

"Is that all true, Mère Pinguèle?" he said.

"Oh, quite true, and not only that, the best part is yet to come; for they take a child and ——." Here Mère Pinguèle showed her fang-like teeth.

"Oh! Mère Pinguèle, are you a witch too?"

"Silence, Gabriel," said Mère Yvonne, "how can you say anything so wicked? Why, bless me, the boy ought to have been in bed ages ago."

Just then all shuddered, and all made the sign of the cross except Mère Pinguèle, for they heard that most dreadful of dreadful sounds—the howl of a wolf, which begins with three sharp barks and then lifts itself up in a long protracted wail of commingled cruelty and despair, and at last subsides into a whispered growl fraught with eternal malice.

There was a forest and a village and a brook, the village was on one side of the brook, none had dared to cross to the other side. Where the village was, all was green and glad and fertile and fruitful; on the other side the trees never put forth green leaves, and a dark shadow hung over it even at noon-day, and in the night-time one could hear the wolves howling—the were-wolves and the wolf-men and the men-wolves, and those very wicked men who for nine days in every year are turned into wolves; but on the green side no wolf was ever seen, and only one little running brook like a silver streak flowed between.

It was spring now and the old crones sat no longer by the fire but before their cottages sunning themselves, and everyone felt so happy that they ceased to tell stories of the "other side." But Gabriel wandered by the brook as he was wont to wander, drawn thither by some strange attraction mingled with intense horror.

His schoolfellows did not like Gabriel ; all laughed and jeered at him, because he was less cruel and more gentle of nature than the rest, and even as a rare and beautiful bird escaped from a cage is hacked to death by the common sparrows, so was Gabriel among his fellows. Everyone wondered how Mère Yvonne, that buxom and worthy matron, could have produced a son like this, with strange dreamy eyes, who was as they said "*pas comme les autres gamins.*" His only friends were the Abbé Félicien whose Mass he served each morning, and one little girl called Carmeille, who loved him, no one could make out why.

The sun had already set, Gabriel still wandered by the brook, filled with vague terror and irresistible fascination. The sun set and the moon rose, the full moon, very large and very clear, and the moonlight flooded the forest both this side and "the other side," and just on the "other side" of the brook, hanging over, Gabriel saw a large deep blue flower, whose strange intoxicating perfume reached him and fascinated him even where he stood.

"If I could only make one step across," he thought, "nothing could harm me if I only plucked that one flower, and nobody would know I had been over at all," for the villagers looked with hatred and suspicion on anyone who was said to have crossed to the "other side," so summing up courage he leapt lightly to the other side of the brook. Then the moon breaking from a cloud shone with unusual brilliance, and he saw, stretching before him, long reaches of the same strange blue flowers each one lovelier than the last, till, not being able to make up his mind which one flower to take or whether to take several, he went on and on,

and the moon shone very brightly, and a strange unseen bird, somewhat like a nightingale, but louder and lovelier, sang, and his heart was filled with longing for he knew not what, and the moon shone and the nightingale sang. But on a sudden a black cloud covered the moon entirely, and all was black, utter darkness, and through the darkness he heard wolves howling and shrieking in the hideous ardour of the chase, and there passed before him a horrible procession of wolves (black wolves with red fiery eyes), and with them men that had the heads of wolves and wolves that had the heads of men, and above them flew owls (black owls with red fiery eyes), and bats and long serpentine black things, and last of all seated on an enormous black ram with hideous human face the wolf-keeper on whose face was eternal shadow; but they continued their horrid chase and passed him by, and when they had passed the moon shone out more beautiful than ever, and the strange nightingale sang again, and the strange intense blue flowers were in long reaches in front to the right and to the left. But one thing was there which had not been before, among the deep blue flowers walked one with long gleaming golden hair, and she turned once round and her eyes were of the same colour as the strange blue flowers, and she walked on and Gabriel could not choose but follow. But when a cloud passed over the moon he saw no beautiful woman but a wolf, so in utter terror he turned and fled, plucking one of the strange blue flowers on the way, and leapt again over the brook and ran home.

When he got home Gabriel could not resist showing his treasure to his mother, though he knew she would

not appreciate it; but when she saw the strange blue flower, Mère Yvonne turned pale and said, "Why child, where hast thou been? sure it is the witch flower"; and so saying she snatched it from him and cast it into the corner, and immediately all its beauty and strange fragrance faded from it and it looked charred as though it had been burnt. So Gabriel sat down silently and rather sulkily, and having eaten no supper went up to bed, but he did not sleep but waited and waited till all was quiet within the house. Then he crept downstairs in his long white night-shirt and bare feet on the square cold stones and picked hurriedly up the charred and faded flower and put it in his warm bosom next his heart, and immediately the flower bloomed again lovelier than ever, and he fell into a deep sleep, but through his sleep he seemed to hear a soft low voice singing underneath his window in a strange language (in which the subtle sounds melted into one another), but he could distinguish no word except his own name.

When he went forth in the morning to serve Mass, he still kept the flower with him next his heart. Now when the priest began Mass and said "Intriobo ad altare Dei," then said Gabriel "Qui nequiquam laeticavit juventutem meam." And the Abbé Félicien turned round on hearing this strange response, and he saw the boy's face deadly pale, his eyes fixed and his limbs rigid, and as the priest looked on him Gabriel fell fainting to the floor, so the sacristan had to carry him home and seek another acolyte for the Abbé Félicien.

Now when the Abbé Félicien came to see after him, Gabriel felt strangely reluctant to say anything about

the blue flower and for the first time he deceived the priest.

In the afternoon as sunset drew nigh he felt better and Carmeille came to see him and begged him to go out with her into the fresh air. So they went out hand in hand, the dark haired, gazelle-eyed boy, and the fair wavy haired girl, and something, he knew not what, led his steps (half knowingly and yet not so, for he could not but walk thither) to the brook, and they sat down together on the bank.

Gabriel thought at least he might tell his secret to Carmeille, so he took out the flower from his bosom and said, "Look here, Carmeille, hast thou seen ever so lovely a flower as this?" but Carmeille turned pale and faint and said, "Oh, Gabriel what is this flower? I but touched it and I felt something strange come over me. No, no, I don't like its perfume, no, there's something not quite right about it, oh, dear Gabriel, do let me throw it away," and before he had time to answer, she cast it from her, and again all its beauty and fragrance went from it and it looked charred as though it had been burnt. But suddenly where the flower had been thrown on this side of the brook, there appeared a wolf, which stood and looked at the children.

Carmeille said, "What shall we do," and clung to Gabriel, but the wolf looked at them very steadfastly and Gabriel recognized in the eyes of the wolf the strange deep intense blue eyes of the wolf-woman he had seen on the "other side," so he said, "Stay here, dear Carmeille, see she is looking gently at us and will not hurt us."

"But it is a wolf," said Carmeille, and quivered all over with fear, but again Gabriel said languidly, "She

will not hurt us." Then Carmeille seized Gabriel's hand in an agony of terror and dragged him along with her till they reached the village, where she gave the alarm and all the lads of the village gathered together. They had never seen a wolf on this side of the brook, so they excited themselves greatly and arranged a grand wolf hunt for the morrow, but Gabriel sat silently apart and said no word.

That night Gabriel could not sleep at all nor could he bring himself to say his prayers; but he sat in his little room by the window with his shirt open at the throat and the strange blue flower at his heart and again this night he heard a voice singing beneath his window in the same soft, subtle, liquid language as before—

Ma zála liràl va jé
 Cwamûlo zhajéla je
 Cárma urádi el javé
 Járma, symai,—carmé—
 Zhála javály thra je
 al vú al vlaûle va azré
 Safralje vairálje va já?
 Cárma serâja
 Lâja lâja
 Luzhà!"

and as he looked he could see the silvern shadows slide on the limmering light of golden hair, and the strange eyes gleaming dark blue through the night and it seemed to him that he could not but follow; so he walked half clad and bare foot as he was with eyes fixed as in a dream silently down the stairs and out into the night.

And ever and again she turned to look on him with her strange blue eyes full of tenderness and passion and sadness beyond the sadness of things human—and as

he foreknew his steps led him to the brink of the Brook. Then she, taking his hand, familiarly said, "Won't you help me over Gabriel?"

Then it seemed to him as though he had known her all his life—so he went with her to the "other side" but he saw no one by him; and looking again beside him there were *two wolves*. In a frenzy of terror, he (who had never thought to kill any living thing before) seized a log of wood lying by and smote one of the wolves on the head.

Immediately he saw the wolf-woman again at his side with blood streaming from her forehead, staining her wonderful golden hair, and with eyes looking at him with infinite reproach, she said—"Who did this?"

Then she whispered a few words to the other wolf, which leapt over the brook and made its way towards the village, and turning again towards him she said, "Oh Gabriel, how could you strike me, who would have loved you so long and so well." Then it seemed to him again as though he had known her all his life but he felt dazed and said nothing—but she gathered a dark green strangely shaped leaf and holding it to her forehead, she said—"Gabriel, kiss the place all will be well again." So he kissed as she has bidden him and he felt the salt taste of blood in his mouth and then he knew no more.

* * * *

Again he saw the wolf-keeper with his horrible troupe around him, but this time not engaged in the chase but sitting in strange conclave in a circle and the black owls sat in the trees and the black bats hung downwards from the branches. Gabriel stood alone in the middle with a hundred wicked eyes fixed on him. They seemed

to deliberate about what should be done with him, speaking in that same strange tongue which he had heard in the songs beneath his window. Suddenly he felt a hand pressing in his and saw the mysterious wolf-woman by his side. Then began what seemed a kind of incantation where human or half human creatures seemed to howl, and beasts to speak with human speech but in the unknown tongue. Then the wolf-keeper whose face was ever veiled in shadow spake some words in a voice that seemed to come from afar off, but all he could distinguish was his own name Gabriel and her name Lilith. Then he felt arms enlacing him.—

Gabriel awoke—in his own room—so it was a dream after all—but what a dreadful dream. Yes, but was it his own room? Of course there was his coat hanging over the chair—yes but—the Crucifix—where was the Crucifix and the benetier and the consecrated palm branch and the antique image of Our Lady perpetuae salutis, with the little ever-burning lamp before it, before which he placed every day the flowers he had gathered, yet had not dared to place the blue flower.—

Every morning he lifted his still dream-laden eyes to it and said Ave Maria and made the sign of the cross, which bringeth peace to the soul—but how horrible, how maddening, it was not there, not at all. No surely he could not be awake, at least not *quite* awake, he would make the benedictive sign and he would be freed from this fearful illusion—yes but the sign, he would make the sign—oh, but what was the sign? Had he forgotten? or was his arm paralyzed? No he could move. Then he had forgotten—and the prayer—he must remember that. A—vae—nunc—mortis—fructus. No surely it did not run thus—but something like it

surely—yes, he was awake he could move at any rate—he would reassure himself—he would get up—he would see the grey old church with the exquisitely pointed gables bathed in the light of dawn, and presently the deep solemn bell would toll and he would run down and don his red cassock and lace-worked cotta and light the tall candles on the altar and wait reverently to vest the good and gracious Abbé Félicien, kissing each vestment as he lifted it with reverent hands.

But surely this was not the light of dawn it was liker sunset! He leapt from his small white bed, and a vague terror came over him, he trembled and had to hold on to the chair before he reached the window. No, the solemn spires of the grey church were not to be seen—he was in the depths of the forest; but in a part he had never seen before—but surely he had explored every part, it must be the “other side.” To terror succeeded a languor and lassitude not without charm—passivity, acquiescence indulgence—he felt, as it were, the strong caress of another will flowing over him like water and clothing him with invisible hands in an impalpable garment; so he dressed himself almost mechanically and walked downstairs, the same stairs it seemed to him down which it was his wont to run and spring. The broad square stones seemed singularly beautiful and iridescent with many strange colours—how was it he had never noticed this before—but he was gradually losing the power of wondering—he entered the room below—the wonted coffee and bread-rolls were on the table.

“Why Gabriel, how late you are to-day.” The voice was very sweet but the intonation strange—and there sat Lilith, the mysterious wolf-woman, her glittering

gold hair tied loose in a loose knot and an embroidery whereon she was tracing strange serpentine patterns, lay over the lap of her maize coloured garment—and she looked at Gabriel steadfastly with her wonderful dark blue eyes and said, “Why, Gabriel, you are late to-day,” and Gabriel answered, “I was tired yesterday, give me some coffee.”

* * * *

A dream within a dream—yes, he had known her all his life, and they dwelt together; had they not always done so? And she would take him through the glades of the forest and gather for him flowers, such as he had never seen before, and tell him stories in her strange, low deep voice, which seemed ever to be accompanied by the faint vibration of strings, looking at him fixedly the while with her marvellous blue eyes.

* * * *

Little by little the flame of vitality which burned within him seemed to grow fainter and fainter, and his lithe lissom limbs waxed languorous and luxurious—yet was he ever filled with a languid content and a will not his own perpetually overshadowed him.

One day in their wanderings he saw a strange dark blue flower like unto the eyes of Lilith, and a sudden half remembrance flashed through his mind.

“What is this blue flower?” he said, and Lilith shuddered and said nothing; but as they went a little further there was a brook—the brook he thought, and felt his fetters falling off him, and he prepared to spring over the brook; but Lilith seized him by the arm and held him back with all her strength, and trembling all over she said, “Promise me Gabriel that you will not cross over.” But he said, “Tell me what is this blue

flower, and why you will not tell me?" And she said, "Look Gabriel at the brook." And he looked and saw that though it was just like the brook of separation it was not the same, the waters did not flow.

As Gabriel looked steadfastly into the still waters it seemed to him as though he saw voices—some impression of the Vespers for the Dead. "Hei mihi quia incolatus sum," and again "De profundis clamavi ad te"—oh, that veil, that overshadowing veil! Why could he not hear properly and see, and why did he only remember as one looking through a threefold semi-transparent curtain. Yes they were praying for him—but who were they? He heard again the voice of Lilith in whispered anguish, "Come away!"

Then he said, this time in monotone, "What is this blue flower, and what is its use?"

And the low thrilling voice answered, "It is called 'lûli uzhûri,' two drops pressed upon the face of the sleeper and he will *sleep*."

He was as a child in her hand and suffered himself to be led from thence, nevertheless he plucked listlessly one of the blue flowers, holding it downwards in his hand. What did she mean? Would the sleeper wake? Would the blue flower leave any stain? Could that stain be wiped off?

But as he lay asleep at early dawn he heard voices from afar off praying for him—the Abbé Félicien, Carmelle, his mother too, then some familiar words struck his ear: "Libera mea porta inferi." Mass was being said for the repose of his soul, he knew this. No, he could not stay, he would leap over the brook, he knew the way—he had forgotten that the brook did not flow. Ah, but Lilith would know—what should he do? The

blue flower—there it lay close by his bedside—he understood now; so he crept very silently to where Lilith lay asleep, her long hair glittering gold, shining like a glory round about her. He pressed two drops on her forehead, she sighed once, and a shade of praeternatural anguish passed over her beautiful face. He fled—terror, remorse, and hope tearing his soul and making fleet his feet. He came to the brook—he did not see that the water did not flow—of course it was the brook of separation; one bound, he should be with things human again. He leapt over and —

A change had come over him—what was it? He could not tell—did he walk on all fours? Yes surely. He looked into the brook, whose still waters were fixed as a mirror, and there, horror, he beheld himself; or was it himself? His head and face, yes; but his body transformed to that of a wolf. Even as he looked he heard a sound of hideous mocking laughter behind him. He turned round—there, in a gleam of red lurid light, he saw one whose body was human, but whose head was that of a wolf, with eyes of infinite malice; and, while this hideous being laughed with a loud human laugh, he, essaying to speak, could only utter the prolonged howl of a wolf.

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But we will transfer our thoughts from the alien things on the “other side” to the simple human village where Gabriel used to dwell. Mère Yvonne was not much surprised when Gabriel did not turn up to breakfast—he often did not, so absent minded was he; this time she said, “I suppose he has gone with the others to the wolf hunt.” Not that Gabriel was given to hunting, but, as she sagely said, “there was no knowing

what he might do next." The boys said, "Of course that muff Gabriel is skulking and hiding himself, he's afraid to join the wolf hunt; why, he wouldn't even kill a cat," for their one notion of excellence was slaughter—so the greater the game the greater the glory. They were chiefly now confined to cats and sparrows, but they all hoped in after time to become generals of armies.

Yet these children had been taught all their life through with the gentle words of Christ—but alas, nearly all the seed falls by the wayside, where it could not bear flower or fruit; how little these know the suffering and bitter anguish or realize the full meaning of the words to those, of whom it is written "Some fell among thorns."

The wolf hunt was so far a success that they did actually see a wolf, but not a success, as they did not kill it before it leapt over the brook to the "other side," where, of course, they were afraid to pursue it. No emotion is more inrooted and intense in the minds of common people than hatred and fear of anything "strange."

Days passed by, but Gabriel was nowhere seen—and Mère Yvonne began to see clearly at last how deeply she loved her only son, who was so unlike her that she had thought herself an object of pity to other mothers—the goose and the swan's egg. People searched and pretended to search, they even went to the length of dragging the ponds, which the boys thought very amusing, as it enabled them to kill a great number of water rats, and Carmeille sat in a corner and cried all day long. Mère Pinquèle also sat in a corner and chuckled and said that she had always said Gabriel

would come to no good. The Abbé Fèlicien looked pale and anxious, but said very little, save to God and those that dwelt with God.

At last, as Gabriel was not there, they supposed he must be nowhere—that is *dead*. (Their knowledge of other localities being so limited, that it did not even occur to them to suppose he might be living elsewhere than in the village.) So it was agreed that an empty catafalque should be put up in the church with tall candles round it, and Mère Yvonne said all the prayers that were in her prayer book, beginning at the beginning and ending at the end, regardless of their appropriateness—not even omitting the instructions of the rubrics. And Carmeille sat in the corner of the little side chapel and cried, and cried. And the Abbé Fèlicien caused the boys to sing the Vespers for the Dead (this did not amuse them so much as dragging the pond), and on the following morning, in the silence of early dawn, said the Dirge and the Requiem—and *this Gabriel heard*.

Then the Abbé Fèlicien received a message to bring the Holy Viaticum to one sick. So they set forth in solemn procession with great torches, and their way lay along the brook of separation.

* * * * *

Essaying to speak he could only utter the prolonged howl of a wolf—the most fearful of all beastial sounds. He howled and howled again—perhaps Lilith would hear him! Perhaps she could rescue him? Then he remembered the blue flower—the beginning and end of all his woe. His cries aroused all the denizens of the forest—the wolves, the wolf-men, and the men-wolves. He fled before them in an agony of terror—behind him, seated on the black ram with human face, was the wolf-

keeper, whose face was veiled in eternal shadow. Only once he turned to look behind—for among the shrieks and howls of bestial chase he heard one thrilling voice moan with pain. And there among them he beheld Lilith, her body too was that of a wolf, almost hidden in the masses of her glittering golden hair, on her forehead was a stain of blue, like in colour to her mysterious eyes, now veiled with tears she could not shed.

* * * * *

The way of the Most Holy Viaticum lay along the brook of separation. They heard the fearful howlings afar off, the torch bearers turned pale and trembled—but the Abbé Fèlicien, holding aloft the Ciborium, said “They cannot harm us.”

Suddenly the whole horrid chase came in sight. Gabriel sprang over the brook, the Abbé Fèlecian held the most Blessed Sacrament before him, and his shape was restored to him and he fell down prostrate in adoration. But the Abbé Fèlicien still held aloft the Sacres Ciborium, and the people fell on their knees in the agony of fear, but the face of the priest seemed to shine with divine effulgence. Then the wolf-keeper held up in his hands the shape of something horrible and inconceivable—a monstrance to the Sacrament of Hell, and three times he raised it, in mockery of the blessed rite of Benediction. And on the third time streams of fire went forth from his fingers, and all the “other side” of the forest took fire, and great darkness was over all.

All who were there and saw and heard it have kept the impress thereof for the rest of their lives—nor till in their death hour was the remembrance thereof absent from their minds. Shrieks, horrible

beyond conception, were heard till nightfall—then the rain rained.

The “other side” is harmless now—charred ashes only; but none dares to cross but Gabriel alone—for once a year for nine days a strange madness comes over him.

ERIC STENBOK.



HARMONY OF EVENING.

*From French of Baudelaire, "Harmonie du Soir,"
p. 155, ed. Lévy.*

NOW trembles on its stem each flower I know,
And like a censer breathes its incense rare,
Music and perfume fill the evening air. . . .
O dreary valse; O dreamy vertigo!

Flowers from their censers breathe an incense rare;
The viol quivers like a heart in woe—
O dreary valse! O dreamy vertigo!
Sad is the sky; but, like God's altar, fair.

The viol quivers like a heart in woe,
A heart that hates the night of blank despair;
The sky is sad; but, like God's altar, fair;
Drowned as in curdling blood the Sun sinks low.

This tender heart that shrinks from blank despair
Culls remnants of bright days of long ago;
Tho' sinks the Sun in blood, my heart's a-glow;
For thoughts of thee shine like a monst'rance there.

(Fleurs du Mal.) P.L.O.

ECHELLE D'EROS.

(D'après Lucien "Amours.")

LE premier pas de ton échelle,
Aphrodite unisexuelle
C'est regarder le doux enfant,
Et de sa voix ouïr le chant.

Le second pas est quand tu serres
Avec des oeillades légères
Ses mains au contour velouté,
Dont charme l'électricité.

Puis, le troisième est quand ta bouche
Ses lèvres purpurines touche,
Ainsi qu' un rayon de soleil
Baise une fleur au teint vermeil.

Le pas prochain, c'est la caresse,
Quand ton bras amoureux le presse,
Pendant que presque sans dessein
Tu Frottes doucement son sein !

Le dernier pas de l'amourette,
N'est-ce-pas l'union complète ;
L'extase des corps et des coeurs,
Et je ne sais quelles langueurs.

(Chants et Poesies de P.L.O.)

OF THE DEFENCE OF POESY.

SHELLEY, although far from a respecter of pedigrees, was nevertheless justly proud of his alleged descent from so exquisite a poet and courtier as the renowned Sir Philip Sidney. Moreover; while his actual kinship with the elder poet appears to have been collateral rather than direct: yet the author of the *Adonais* offers, undoubtedly, not a few psychical resemblances to the impassioned singer of the incomparable *Stella*. Both in their day defended the citadel of Poesy against the onslaughts of the Philistines: by means of their characteristic prose Alastor and Astrophel defeated the legions of the profane with their own weapons.

In the year 1579 Stephen Gosson (late of Ch. Ch., Oxon), an actor and playwright turned preacher, published a pamphlet called *The School of Abuse*, which, according to the title-page, contained "a pleasant invective against Poets, Pipers, Players, Jesters and suchlike Caterpillars of a Commonwealth." It was a tediously learned composition; and Gosson was rash enough to dedicate it to Sidney. Two years later Sidney produced an answer to it by composing his famous essay *An Apologie for Poetrie*, which however was left unpublished until 1595, nine years after Sir Philip's death at Arnheim. Thus, Gosson's *School of Abuse* was the precursor, by a little over fifty years, of Prynne's *Histriomastix, or The*

Scourge of Stage Players, to be in its turn immortalised by Milton's magnificent counterblast, the *Masque of Comus*. The later editions of Sidney's famous essay are entitled *The Defence of Poesy*; and it was probably no accident which caused Shelley to write above his unfinished piece on the same subject the words "*A Defence of Poetry*."

Sidney, after modestly declaring that he knows not "by what mischance in these my not old years and idlest times, having slipt into the title of a Poet, I am provoked to say something unto you in defence of that my unelected vocation"; proceeds forthwith to give a sketch of poetry from the earliest ages to his own day. He tells his reader how history has usurped the seat of Poetry, Herodotus even calling each of the books of his history by the name of one of the Muses; how Plato has clothed the dry bones of his philosophy in a beautiful vesture, borrowed from Poetry; how among the Romans a poet was called Vates, the Diviner or Prophet, "so heavenly a title did that excellent people bestow upon this heart-ravishing knowledge"; how both the oracles of Apollo and the prophecies of the Sibyls were wholly delivered in verse; and how David's psalms are a divine poem, while "lastly and principally, his handling his prophecy, is merely poetical." He then shows how the imagination may transcend Nature: for "Nature never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry, as divers poets have done: her world is brazen, the Poets only deliver a golden." And yet the Idea of the poet or maker is not wholly imaginative; to bestow a Cyrus on the world is "to make many Cyrus's, if they will learn aright, why, and how that Maker made him": the Art of Poetry then, above everything else, differentiates us from the rest of created beings; themselves, as it were, the finished

poems of the arch-singer ; for " our erected wit maketh us know what perfection is, and yet our infected will, keepeth us from reaching unto it." Poesy, then, is an art of imitation, as Aristotle says ; and of this Sidney discovers three several kinds. The religious, as in the *Song of Songs* and the *Book of Job* ; the philosophical, as in Lucretius and Vergil's *Georgics* ; and lastly the group of Poets *par excellence*, " for these third be they which most properly do imitate to teach and delight, and to imitate, borrow nothing of what is, hath been, or shall be : but range only reined with learned discretion, into the divine consideration of what may be, and should be." Sidney uses the word Poet in its fullest sense ; for even anent his third division of singers while admitting that " the greatest part of Poets have apparelled their poetical inventions in that numbrous kind of writing which is called verse " : yet he adds, " indeed but apparelled, verse being but an ornament and no cause to Poetry : since there have been many most excellent Poets, that never versified, and now swarm many versifiers that need never answer to the name of Poets. For Xenophon, who did imitate so excellently, as to give us '*effigiem justi imperii*,' the portraiture of a Just Empire under the name of Cyrus (as Cicero saith of him) made therein an absolute heroical Poem." From which it may be surmised that the learned Sir Philip Sidney would, had he the opportunity, have found a place among his third division of Poets for the writer of *Leaves of Grass* as well as for the maker of *Marius the Epicuræan*.

Sidney shows how the peerless Poet illuminates the dark places unearthed by Philosopher or Historian, by giving a perfect picture of some imagined scene or circumstance. He quotes many an instance from Poetry

of fiction more real than history ; of some poetical conceit surviving reality : for instance, " Let us hear," he says, " old Anchises speaking in the midst of Troy's flames, or see Ulysses in the fulness of all Calypso's delights, bewail his absence from barren and beggarly Ithaca " : or again, " Meseems I see before my eyes the lost Child's disdainful prodigality, turned to envy a Swine's dinner " ; moreover ; he quotes the parable of Dives and Lazarus, and the fables of Æsop, as of far greater value than any mere collocation of hard facts or tangled theories. He proceeds to shew how Aristotle considers Poetry more philosophical and more studiously serious than history : for the former deals with the universal consideration ; whereas history is more especially concerned with the particular. There is a close analogy between this position and that of Shelley in the opening sentences of his essay. The later poet defines reason and imagination as the principles of analysis (τὸ λογίζειν) and of synthesis (κὸ ποιεῖν) respectively. He then considers Poetry in a general sense as the expression of the imagination ; " as connate with the origin of man," who in an early state of society is a wind-swept lyre sensible to the most subtle influences both of nature and of his fellows : " Every original language," he finely says, " near to its source is in itself the chaos of a cyclic poem : the copiousness of lexicography and the distinctness of grammar are the works of a later age, and are merely the catalogue and the form of the creations of poetry." He then restricts the word poetry to its more ordinary use ; and becoming strangely reminiscent of Sidney's words on the same subject declares the popular division into prose and verse to be " inadmissible in accurate philosophy." He decries the vanity of trans-

lation : " It were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its colour and odour, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower—and this is the burthen of the curse of Babel." He holds that if the harmony or spirit of poetical language be retained, the poet may often discard traditional form : he cites Plato and Bacon as essentially poets ; while he instances Shakspeare, Dante, and Milton, as before all things, supreme philosophers. To Sidney of all Sciences the Poet is the monarch who will lead you through a fair country : to Shelley a poem is " the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth " ; and while " a story of particular facts is as a mirror which obscures and distorts that which should be beautiful : poetry is a mirror which makes beautiful that which is distorted." Shelley also names Herodotus, Plutarch, and Livy as poets : the poet indeed is a nightingale the whole beauty of whose song cannot be fully understood until after he has ceased to sing ; for " the Jury which sits in judgment upon a poet, belonging as he does to all time, must be composed of his peers : it must be impanneled by Time from the selectest of the wise of many generations." The wise of many generations have, since Sidney, been moved by " the old song of Percy and Douglas " more than with a trumpet and have not scrupled to be proud of their " own barbarousness." Both poets instance how the founder of Christianity vouchsafed to use the flowers of Poetry, allegory and parable : Shelley mentions Homer as the delight of infant Greece ; the foundation of all future civilization ; the creator of heroic types such as Achilles, Hector and Ulysses : while

Sidney speaks of how Homer, a Greek, flourished, before Greece flourished; for the honour of whose birth-place seven cities strove, though many towns banished philosophers; whose Achilles was the ideal knight of Alexander, "the Phœnix of Warlike Princes, who left his schoolmaster, living Aristotle, behind him, but took dead Homer with him." Sidney easily overthrows the time-honoured objections against poetry: its uselessness; its falsity; its being the "Nurse of Abuse, infecting us with many pestilent desires"; and the fact that Plato banished Poets out of his Commonwealth. The first three objections he answers with charming paradoxes: such as "the Poet never affirms anything, and therefore never lieth"; or "Poetry abuseth not man's wit, but man's wit abuseth Poetry"; while as for Plato's dislike for Poets it was the custom of Philosophers after having "picked out of the sweet mystries of Poetry" to seek by all means, like ungrateful apprentices, to discredit their masters.

Sidney indeed appears as a strict upholder of the Unities in the drama; he deprecates the mingling of Kings and Clowns, and the production of mongrel tragicomedies: but Sir Philip wrote before Marlowe's mighty line was heard in the land; and before Doctor Faustus's greater pupil had in *King Lear*—in Shelley's words "the most perfect specimen of the dramatic art existing in the world"—mingled Clowns and Kings in so transcendent a fashion. The author of *An Apologie for Poetrie* had only the cumbrous *Gorboduc* to swear by amid the arid waste which stretched from the far-off splendours of Chaucer and Gower almost to his own time. Finally: he ends a long peroration with the hope that "all that have had the evil luck to read this ink-wasting toy of mine" may

no more scorn the sacred mysteries of Poetry ; but should they still remain obdurate then although he could not wish them the asses ears of Midas " nor to be rimed to death, as is said to be done in Ireland : yet this much curse I must send you, in the behalf of all poets, that while you live, you live in love, and never get favour, for lacking skill of a Sonnet : and when you die, your memory die from the earth, for want of an Epitaph."

Shelley, on the other hand, traverses much the same ground ; save that he has the most glorious period of English literature between the date of his essay and the death of Sidney ; but on the Elizabethan age as a whole he hardly touches : he is more concerned with the abstract qualifications of poetry ; and of the beautiful things to be said by the way. With *King Lear* before him ; his view of the Drama is more wide than Sidney's could well be. It takes Genius to transcend tradition : and the pioneer into the untraversed places of the spirit is doubly happy who has a man of kindred mind to interpret him. Shelley, although he is willing to admit that the combination of tragedy with comedy as in *King Lear* may determine the balance in its favour as against the *Agamemnon*, yet looks wistfully at the more complete equipment of the Greek stage as concerns the semi-religious accessories of harmonious music and dancing. In a luminous paragraph he sums up the poetical history of Rome : the great writers of the Augustan age saw man and nature in the mirror of Greece ; the true poetry of Rome lived in its institutions ; these " are the episodes of that cyclic poem written by Time upon the memories of men. The Past, like an inspired rhapsodist, fills the theatre of everlasting generations with their harmony."

Dante and Milton who stand at equal intervals from the Reformation were both deeply penetrated with the ancient religion of the civilised world: the first is the bridge uniting the stream of time, the ancient with the modern world; the first religious reformer and awakener of entranced Europe, inspirer of our own Chaucer eventually: the second is the maker of the great epic, the hero is Satan. It may not here be wholly irrelevant to remark that the attitude of Satan to God in the *Paradise Lost* is curiously parallel to that of Prometheus to Zeus in Shelley's own wonderful poem.

Finally: as a poet writing of his art Shelley declares that "poetry is a sword of lightning, ever unsheathed, which consumes the scabbard that would contain it; it is at once the centre and circumference of knowledge; it is that which comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred; it is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds; it is as it were the interpenetration of a divine nature through our own; but its footsteps are like those of a wind over the sea, which the coming calm erases, and whose traces remain only as on the wrinkled sand which paves it; poetry redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man. The most unfailing herald, companion, and follower of the awakening of a great people to work a beneficial change in opinion or institution, is poetry; for poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world."

A. R. BAYLEY.

IN PRAISE OF IDLENESS.

NOW and again some person with more courage than discretion adventures a pæan in praise of idleness. But it falls on deaf ears, for the world has long since made up its mind to avow its contempt for the foibles it fears to betray, especially for those it would willingly practice were it not afraid of consequences. Only lately the author of one of the least known, and therefore most delicious, modern books—himself a citizen of Chicago, of all places for such a prophet to arise—expressed his belief that “too much has been said about the dignity of labour and not enough of the preciousness of leisure.” Civilization he would have you admit is “heavily in the debt of leisure, and the success of any society worth considering is to be estimated largely by the use to which its fortunate ones put their spare moments”; going on to say that “in the great land of which Shelby County may be called the centre”—in other words America—“activity considered of itself, and quite apart from its object and results, is regarded as a very meritorious thing. There the bare figure of leisure when exposed to the public gaze is expected to be decorously draped in the garments of strenuous endeavour. People there are expected to be busy, even if they are not.”

To an unprejudiced person—the favourite synonym

for oneself—it is always beyond doubt that many of the labels which ticket the virtues and vices to-day have been mixed up. Whether designedly by the custodians of our morals we need not enquire. Probably the muddle is the debris of an outworn creed that mortification is in itself wholesome; that nasty doses are health giving, and pleasant draughts the reverse of innocuous. At the time cleanliness was loudly proclaimed as next to godliness its unfashionable address caused it to be neglected; now when advertising placards recognise no other virtue people practise it secretly. So possibly the gospel of work so strenuously insisted on will ultimately induce people to let it alone, because of its noisy companions. Most people have not education enough to appear ignorant, nor enough energy to decide to be lazy. They still fancy that useless information is an excellent substitute for knowledge, and that idleness is a crime and work in itself a virtue.

Far from the wise philosophy of the savage, who has learned to limit his desires to the easily attainable, is this greedy effort to make the most of that brief life which an orthodox hymn assures us is here our portion. Odd is it not that we deplore the brevity of time and waste in needless labours the grudged measure allotted to us? We delight to destroy happiness by efforts to obtain it. The peace of a lazy day between the sheets, the superb omnipotence of complete inaction is held to be an active crime. We are told also on the authority of a popular hymn that "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do," which is exactly the point. Satan objects to idleness sinless and satisfying, and prefers activity, which is obviously mischief. The hurrying to and fro is held to be peculiarly an attribute

of our ghostly foe. "Dost laugh in scorn to see how fools are vexed to add to golden numbers golden numbers" is not the utterance of a preacher but of a poet. Yet we cannot forget too often that poets are sometimes preachers—despite the fact that successors of the ever-lamented Tupper, who proclaim the beauty of work, unmindful of the example they offer of its futility, gain not even the immortality of Clapham they strive so hard to attain.

The joy of idleness is often confused with that rapt contemplation of the Ideal—something symbolic and Ibsen-born, which is the attribute of a limited income and still more limited common sense. The state of subjection desired by a Buddhist who would attain Nirvana is akin to the glorified torpidity of a retired buttermilk. The weary woman's epitaph, "Don't weep for me now, don't weep for me never, I'm going to do nothing for ever and ever," holds a wiser faith. Merely to avoid work is not idleness, on the contrary, such an effort is dangerously near activity, for the vigour needed to suppress—a revolution, or a rhyme—is quite distinct from the ease of renunciation, giving up that which one does not really desire. Preferable to this is the attitude of the sagacious fox who on the suspicion that the grapes were out of reach knew intuitively that they were sour. Overlooking the obvious fact that in England foxes are deemed to be carnivorous, and might be trusted in Covent Garden with impunity, one cannot do better than thus recognise all difficult pleasures as sour, which in truth they must be, however sweet when close at hand. Idleness, like the unexpected itself, only happens when one is not looking for it.

Custom and Mrs. Grundy are too strong. In the

privacy of print one may advocate heresies forbidden in the publicity of home life. Hogarth, who gave a career full of novel emotions to his idle prentice, awarded a dull Paradise to the industrious; and we still fail to catch the point of his sarcasm, which seems to be the folly of either sort of work—for real idleness neither of his heroes knew.

We pity—especially if we are poor—the mere money-maker, yet all the time shew greater agility in pursuing even less valuable stuff. Yea though one digested the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, supplement and all, shall it help you to gain a new thrill from a sunset over the grimy Thames, or add a new rhythm to its flashing water beneath an August sun? The man who despises all his creature comforts is better employed; the Salvation Army fanatic is more meritoriously content. For to pursue the superfluous is the true folly. To be idle frankly and gracefully is a lost art. Nobody preaches its gospel. Did he believe it he would not trouble to proselytize any more than had I the courage of my convictions I should venture a word in their praise. "To exist beautifully" has become a bye-word in Philistia—this shows the folly of betraying the utterance of the Sphinx, and also the certainty of her secret being misunderstood by all who hear it at second hand.

Of course we must not overlook the fatal temptation that besets a certain class. Probably to abstain from a course of university extension lectures demands a healthy brutality unknown alike to the muscular Christian or the sanitary Agnostic. The craving for culture and the acquisition of other people's knowledge is supposed to be a product of civilization; on the contrary it is the lowest human passion. To be mindful of the

value of the unimportant is only known to the monarchs of creation, the few bipeds and quadrupeds who have retained the supernatural power of avoiding profitable industry. Idleness is its own reward, as surely as virtue is its own punishment. But we must take its reward first—to look forward to idleness as the final end of work is the most insidious fallacy. Work indeed is but a narcotic to dull one's real vitality. The actual dignity of labour should never be imperilled by too close familiarity. Idleness may be one's bedfellow—work should be kept at a formal distance, and the pleasure of its companionship left to very rich people only, who have no other amusement possible. Idleness, forbidden to kings and not unknown to costers, would, if once it became universal, bring back the Golden Age—for when nobody did anything except what they wished, the fatal inclination to industry would prompt all the foolish people to the few necessary labours, which all the wise could then placidly enjoy.

Laziness is too often but procrastination, merely putting off the needless pleasure until one has more energy to be disappointed with it. Indolence which is mere inertness is also a foolish imitation. The true idleness is to let fancy have play, to loiter and own that the pleasure of life is living. The disease of mere work—whether passively doing it, or actively leaving it undone—has a library to record its approval; the disease of idleness may not be proven, since ease is its real synonym. He who has learned so much becomes a king straightway, the content beloved of the poets is not that which is attainable after effort, but the attained with no effort, save the enormous vigour needed to prevent hereditary restlessness goading one to useful

labour, which must be conquered ere real idling is possible. The art of doing without must not be confused with a monastic and theatrical renunciation, which shows how much it really values a thing by refusing to accept it. The idle singer neath a blossomed bough, content to see the wild world go its ways—heedless of whence or how—is the type one loves most.

Since the apologist for leisure, the author of *The Chevalier of Pensieri-Vani* quoted just now, spake from that lotus eating city, the abode of apathy—Chicago—one is tempted to say that he who sang its joys knows it not, seeing that the portion the fates allot him he destroys in praising it; but this were to misunderstand the case, one man's work is another man's leisure. Idleness is surely not always to refrain even from leisure; that is merely another aspect of work—it is the involuntary impulse to drift with the whim of the moment, to discover exquisite delight in a sound or an odour, to cease to enquire, and above all to refuse to defend one's position. Such impulse must be inborn. The cult of the excellent Mr. Smiles showed "self-help" to be helping oneself at life's banquet table as largely as others permitted. The genuinely idle person merely allows others to help him. For happy as he must be, the world has always a weak corner in its heart for a charming idler. Idle—in its easy sense its early meaning is something that is sportive, playful, a mood of dainty toying with life, the opposite of strenuous endeavour, and may be as nearly allied to activity as inactivity so it be but spontaneous. But reasoning on such a matter would be folly—better to remember that as *gloire* rhyming nearly enough to *victoire* made the

French a military people, so leisure rhyming to pleasure should make the English a happy nation. But nobody wants to be happy—he would rather be busily mal-content. For idleness disturbs no one, and to cease from troubling his fellows is the last renunciation a philosopher ever dreams of practising.

GLEESON WHITE.



IN LYONESSE.

LEAN but thy forehead backward o'er my breast
Till nigh-enshrouded by thy curls sun dight,
Death's self grown gracious in his own despite
Us twain forget to slay. O Rose, confessed
Flower crowned consummate o'er the radiant rest
In earthly furrow sown! Thou beacon-light
Of Love's own fashioning for his heart's delight
No cares corroding our scant hours arrest!
Be thou my care, my coronet, my cross
Of faith unfeigned beside the Severn Sea,
That crawls with sapphire fingers amorously
To clip thy foot; for here no mad waves toss
To break repose, nor memory maketh loss
Of hours too brief to mock Eternity.

A. R. BAYLEY.

Fragment of last month's SPIRIT LAMP with marginal comments supposed to have been written by the Editor of the ISIS, picked up in the High Street.

I suppose the play is unhealthy, morbid, unwholesome, and un-English, ça va sans dire. It is certainly un-English, because it is written in French, and therefore unwholesome to the average Englishman, who can't digest French. It is probably morbid and unhealthy, for there is no representation of quiet domestic life, nobody slaps anybody else on the back all through the play, and there is not a single reference to roast beef from one end of the dialogue to the other, and though it is true that there is a reference to Christianity, there are no muscular Christians. Anyone, therefore, who suffers from that most appalling and widespread of diseases which takes the form of a morbid desire for health had better avoid and flee from *Salomé*, or they will surely get a shock that it will take months of the daily papers and Charles Kingsley's novels to counteract. But the less violently and aggressively healthy, those who are healthy to live and do not live to be healthy, will find in Mr. Oscar Wilde's tragedy the beauty of a perfect work of art, a joy for ever, ambrosia to feed their souls with honey of sweet-bitter thoughts.

Hear! hear!

I quite agree with you

So much the worse for the dialogue.

There is one here who would like to get hold of you.

How can a disease take the form of health?

Charles Kingsley is a better writer than you ever be.

Rot! Bosh!

ALFRED DOUGLAS.

PLEASURE THE PILGRIM.

WHERE the dust is thick, in the toiling street ;
Through the hush that reigns where the stately dwell,
He passes with sound of flute and bell,
By night and day in cold and heat ;

He passes along with a dancing gait
And twines bright flowers in his hair ;
His eyes are clear as the winter air
When night is early and dawn comes late.

Two petals that curl, as wayward and red ;
A kiss of blood upon night's new snow,
Are his lips, where the swift smiles come and go
Like meteor beams when the day is dead.

He dances unseen through the passers by,
His breath is a word in the ear of each,
A word that lives not in any speech,
And each one follows, he knows not why.

In the cup he holds with his long white hand,
He has mingled the red of the wine with dust,
And wisdom with folly, and love with lust,
That they who drink may not understand.

For a season he strews their path with gold
And holds bright jewels to their eyes.
For a season he stains with glorious dyes
The tissue of life that is waxing old.

Then flitting further in wayward flight
He leaves in their hands the broken toys
Of outworn pleasures and tasteless joys
That can charm no longer or delight.

Still those who have not yet followed him
And the sound of his flute, or his magic smile,
They long to bask, if but for a while,
In the light that has made their lives look dim.

While the dancers that dance in his changing maze
Are as bubbles that shine on a moving stream,
As flowers that bloom in beauteous dream,
As the arching flight of a rocket's blaze.

Like a lute when the hand of the player is still,
Like a rose that the wind of the morning has strewn,
Like a cage whence the birds with their music have flown,
Are those who have drunk of his wine their fill !

The children laugh without knowing why,
While youth looks up with deeper blush,
And the aged stoop with a sudden hush,
When Pleasure the Pilgrim passes by.

B.



THE INCOMPARABLE BEAUTY OF
MODERN DRESS.

IN one of the minor Colleges of Oxford, a mimic court was lately held to try the case of an undergraduate, against whom an indictment for excessive foppery had been lodged by one of his friends. The case created no little interest in the University. The most able speakers from the Union were retained on either side and, so as to secure a perfectly free and unprejudiced trial, the jury was empannelled of twelve undergraduates with no preconceived ideas upon any subject under the sun. The defendant, one of those who try to realize the ideal man by combining in themselves whatever seems best in either sex, was rather rich and not ill looking; he could paint very nicely in water-colour, spoke French with an accent that was the envy of all Paris and, though not exactly clever, had a considerable fund of woman's wit. In the course of the trial, counsel for the prosecution called for certain books that would, he contended, throw some light upon the toilet of the defendant and, though the application was opposed by the opposite side, the judge ruled that they should be produced. There were three of them, bound in apple-green leather and bearing the title *Journal de Toilette*. On the cover of each was a device in gold line of Narcissus regarding himself in a lake of formal scollops, while two little

fishes swam reverently round his reflection. The first page bore the signatures of the defendant and of his valet and of the remainder every one was given up—as in a diary—to one day of the year. In ruled spaces were recorded there the cut and texture of the suit, the colour of the necktie, the form of jewellery which had been worn on the day to which the page referred. No detail was omitted and a separate space was set aside for “Remarks.” The prosecution called someone to prove that, taking into consideration all the articles of dress mentioned, there were no less than 95,000,000 possible combinations that could be worn; but the judge, a distinguished classic, ruled the evidence irrelevant on the ground that mathematics were not an exact science. How the trial terminated is not pertinent to the subject of this brief article (I believe the defendant was let off with the nominal sentence that he should sacrifice two virgin neckties in the quadrangle) and I merely cite the case as of import in so far as it teaches us to what a point of artistic excellence the dress of a modern man may attain.

It is quite true, I do not doubt, that in every epoch of history the youth of all the great courts or cities has given itself over to the vanity of the body and has indulged in all the little pomps of costume. We read of the delicately embroidered tunics worn by a *barbatulus* in the days of the Empire, of the care that the young Athenian would spend in knotting the thong of his sandal; at the Court of Richard II. we learn that the young nobles “thought more of the nice gilding of their belts and the pretty polishment of their sword-tops than of the cure of their master’s kingship.” Foppery may have found its chief extravagance at

Versailles when Louis XV. was king, but I doubt if there has ever been a time when dress amongst men reached so high an artistic level as in England at this moment, when the fashion was so reasonable and beautiful or the desire to conform to it so widespread. Morally, it may be that this tendency towards widespread love of dress is regrettable. I should not wonder; though it seems to me that this very love often affords an admirable discipline to young men who otherwise might have dangerously little interest in life. The necessity of early rising which it entails—else how should the toilet be complete before sunset?—the habits of carefulness and self-respect and of conformity to social law which are inculcated by it—all these, I imagine, have their ethical value. The making of his toilet is to the young exquisite the healthy exercise of a trained faculty in accord with the highest excellence.

At all events, the spread of foppery from the upper to the middle classes is a cause for great aesthetic gladness. As in Life our first duty is to realise the soul, so in Art it should be to idealise the body. Apart from the intense pleasure that may be found in dressing well, to do so is our artistic duty to the community, and it is useless to set about beautifying our furniture or our thoroughfares till the principles of self-adornment have been truly gauged by all classes. Personal appearance is the very basis of Art. It is often asked how the Jews have contrived to exercise so vast and subtle an influence over the artistic history of modern Europe, and the answer is to be found in the number of tailor's shops owned and managed by members of the race in England, France and Germany. The scissors have been as powerful a weapon in their hands as the sword in the hands of the Gentiles.

But, it is argued, can any near approach be made to Beauty through the medium of costume, when we consider the narrow, sombre limits prescribed by the sumptuary laws of to-day? Nothing, in point of fact, could be more foolish than the complaints made against modern dress on the ground that it is monotonous, common or unlovely. Of the dress of no period whatsoever can we say that it is lacking in loveliness and we should not forget that, whilst Beauty is for ever being prattled of by those who have the slightest knowledge of it; ugliness is a word which is seldom heard except from the lips of those to whom the sense of Beauty has been denied. To the aesthetic temperament nothing seems ugly. There are degrees of beauty—that is all.

And I do not know of any period when costume reached so supreme a point of excellence as in London at this moment.

The problem of dress is, of course, intimately connected with the problem of the human form. So to cloak the body that its beauty may not be hidden nor its defects revealed, that is the enigma which, by flitting ever from one fashion to another, by the selection of many modes, we have for years been trying to solve, and at length, I maintain, we have solved it finally. It is as yet difficult to realise this, but let us reflect for a moment how everything points to its truth. How little fashion has changed during the last five years! The mean, which has been struck between the looseness of clothes in the 'seventies and their rigid tightness in the early 'eighties, is one from which there are no signs of our departure.

Take, for example, the problem of the leg. Different

centuries and different nations have all had their theories as to how the leg should be clothed. The Romans failed for the reason that they revealed too little of it. They allowed no form to the body; in the thick folds of a toga, the figure of Hyperion is hardly fairer than that of a Satyr; Punchinello, thus clad, might pass for Adonis. The other extreme is found in the costume of savages whether in the heart of Africa or merely across the border. Legs indeed may not be very beautiful things, but it is silly and barbarous of the Scotch to expose them, as the Spartans exposed the children who did not please them, to the bleak winds of the hill side. Moreover it is shirking the problem. For the truth is that though legs may be unsatisfactory in point of form, most of them possess a certain grace of movement and proportion to the rest of the frame: so that the only right way of dealing with them is to cover them, as is done by the tailor of to-day, in cloth that shall fall gracefully—not too loosely—round them. Thus the limbs of the weakling escape ridicule, the muscles of the “strong man” are veiled from our frightened eyes. The compromise is an excellent one.

Let any one who has modish yearnings to the dress of—say!—the Elizabethan era, pass one morning down the slope of St. James’ Street. Can he fail to be pleased at the sight of the dandies he will meet there? Are they not better clad than the courtiers of the sixteenth century in their puffings and pinchings of silk or velvet. There is something wonderful in the sombre delicacy of modern dress, in its congruity of black and of white and of grey. There is not the smallest part of a modern dandy’s dress that is not truly related to its fellows and inseparable

from them. The limbs of the body are not more necessary one to another, and it is in this "inevitableness," this elaborate simplicity that modern dress gives it greatest charm. The difference between the flawless and the faulty in our costume is the difference between a mosaic, closely and exquisitely wrought, and a piece of patch-work.

Not that, in any sense, this austerity tends to promote monotony. Fashion does not seek to rob us of our Free Will and, truly, there has never been a time when costume gave scope for so many tricks of taste and symbols of personality as it does to-day. One of the greatest exquisites in Europe, one of the strictest of Fashion's priests, dresses every day in accordance with his mood, yet never is known to violate the prevailing fashion. In the morning, after his bath, he puts on a plain gray dressing-gown, in this he breakfasts, looks through his letters and reads the morning papers at his leisure. With the aid of a cigarette, he allows his temper, as formed by the weather, the news and so forth, slowly to develop itself for the day. His mood suggests imperceptibly what colour, what form of clothes he shall wear. He rings for his valet—"I will wear such and such a coat, such and such a tie: my trousers will be of this or that tone and my jewellery of that or this pattern." Thus it is possible for a man of subtle taste and temperament to use dress in its most modern form, as a means of realising and—what is better—of accentuating the true mood of his mind.

This rational and practical side of costume, as an intensifier and an index of personality, has hitherto been almost unknown. There are scores of ways

in which character is read now-a-days—how comes it that no one has yet seriously tried to read it through the medium of clothes? In the curves and conditions of a top-hat there is, I maintain, fully as sure a criterion of the wearer's character as in his face or his hand or his handwriting. How comes it that no paper is devoted exclusively to the subject of male attire? The number of papers that cater for the foppery of ladies is ever on the increase; yet the columns of our press scarcely is mention ever made of the dress of men. Even the graphic reporters give us no more than the fact that "the Premier wore a tea-rose in his button-hole," "that the stalls were thronged with youths in immaculate cuffs and collars" or—this is seldom omitted—that "the prisoner wore a tightly buttoned frock-coat."

Yet, however, useful dress might be made to the science of psychology and whatever encouragement the establishment of a fashion-paper for gentlemen might give to the art of personal adornment, we must not forget that dress is, first of all, an art, something to be pursued for its own sake and the sake of the beauty it may yield us. To pursue it thus is, at this moment, the aim of the young dandies of Pall Mall; they dress well by virtue of instinctive imitation and their artistic value is as great as that of the plaster casts of Greek sculptury. But to lead the fashion, to be a giver of sumptuary laws is something to which they cannot aspire and is reserved for artists of the eye like Brummel or Disraeli, or of the touch like Wainwright or the brilliant favourite of Lady Blessington. And to understand the real value of the modern costume of man has been reserved for a poet, whom

journalists, seldom guilty of a breach of bad taste, attacked with unusual vulgarity for this very cause. The writer of that splendid, sinister work *Dorian Gray* has given an entirely modern setting to his characters. In every scene of the story we find him dwelling upon and drawing rich dramatic effect from such things as the wing of an Inverness cape or a pair of straw-coloured gloves or, even, a pair of patent-leather boots. Foppishness is woven, with exquisite effect, through the very fabric of the work.

Indeed, there has never been a time when man's dress afforded so many surprises of beauty. There is a great charm in the black and blue stripes which spring upon a top-hat when the sun smites it with his rays, and a charm—is there not?—in the glint of candles upon the polished surface of a shirt-front or in the facings of a coat covered by the gardenia's moonlike disc or the tattered crimson disc of a carnation, in the soft curves of a knotted tie or in the fall of a fur-lined coat?

Now in the ordering of all these elegantiae of costume there will always be ample scope for change. There are many things that Fashion in her fickleness may effect; she has a delightful future, full of whimsical ease and happy trifling. For in Dress, as in Politics, there cannot be absolute finality. New colours and patterns will be imagined, new stuffs woven, new gems, it may be, unearthed, and, to give such things their vogue, there must always be some prince paramount of Fashion whose taste shall dominate the town and guard dandyism from monotony by the daring of his whims.

But the basis of costume cannot, I think, be changed

hereafter. The fashion of the last few years has crystallised. It cannot be explained away. Everywhere it is accepted. The barbarous costumes which were designed in bygone days by vulgarity and class-hatred or hatred of race are happily dying out. The grotesque forms of Highland dress are so decadent that the kilt, I am assured, is now confined entirely to the soldiery and to a small cult of Scotch Archaicists. The costermonger with his little rows of pearl buttons has fled for sanctuary to the variety stages and the costume of the Swiss girl has become a mere tradition of the fancy ball. From the boulevard of one capital and from the avenues of another the people flock to the tasteful tailors of London. Even into Oxford, this curious little city, where nothing is ever born and nothing ever quite dies, the force of the movement has penetrated, insomuch that tasselled cap and gown of degree are rarely seen in the streets or the colleges. In a place which was, till recent times, scarcely less remote, in Japan, the long bright gardens are trodden every day by men who are shod in boots like our own, who walk—a little strangely still—in closely-cut cloth of little colour and stop each other, from time to time, laughing to show how that they too can fold an umbrella after the manner of real Europeans.

It is very strange, this universal acquiescence in the dress that we have designed. It is very strange that, of all nations, England should have done this great service for the beauty of nations. Let us dwell upon this feature in her history. Much may be forgiven to the Victorian era for that it solved the problem of costume.

H. M. BEERBOHM.

APOLOGIA PRO CLASSE SUA.

(A FRAGMENT.)

TALK not to me of broad philosophies,
Of morals, ethics, laws of life ;
Give me no cautious theories,
No instruments of wordy strife.
I will not forge laborious chains
Link after link, till seven times seven,
I need no ponderous iron cranes
To haul my soul from earth to Heaven.
But with a burnished wing
Rainbow-hued in the sun,
I will dive and leap and run
In the air, and I will bring
Back to the earth a heavenly thing.
 I will dance through the stars
 And pass the blue bars
Of Heaven. I will catch hands with God
And speak with Him,
I will kiss the lips of the Seraphim
And the deep-eyed Cherubim,
I will pluck of the flowers that nod
Row upon row upon row,
In the infinite gardens of God,
To the breath of the wind of the sweep of the lyres,
 And the song of the strings
 And the golden wires,
And the mystical musical things
That the world may not know.

* * * *

ALFRED DOUGLAS.

FROM THE ARABIC.

OH when will it be, oh when will it be, oh when.
That she shall be here, and the flute be here, and the wine
be here? oh then
Her lips shall kiss the lips of the flute, and my lips shall kiss
the wine,
And I shall drink music from her sweet lips, and she shall
drink madness from mine.

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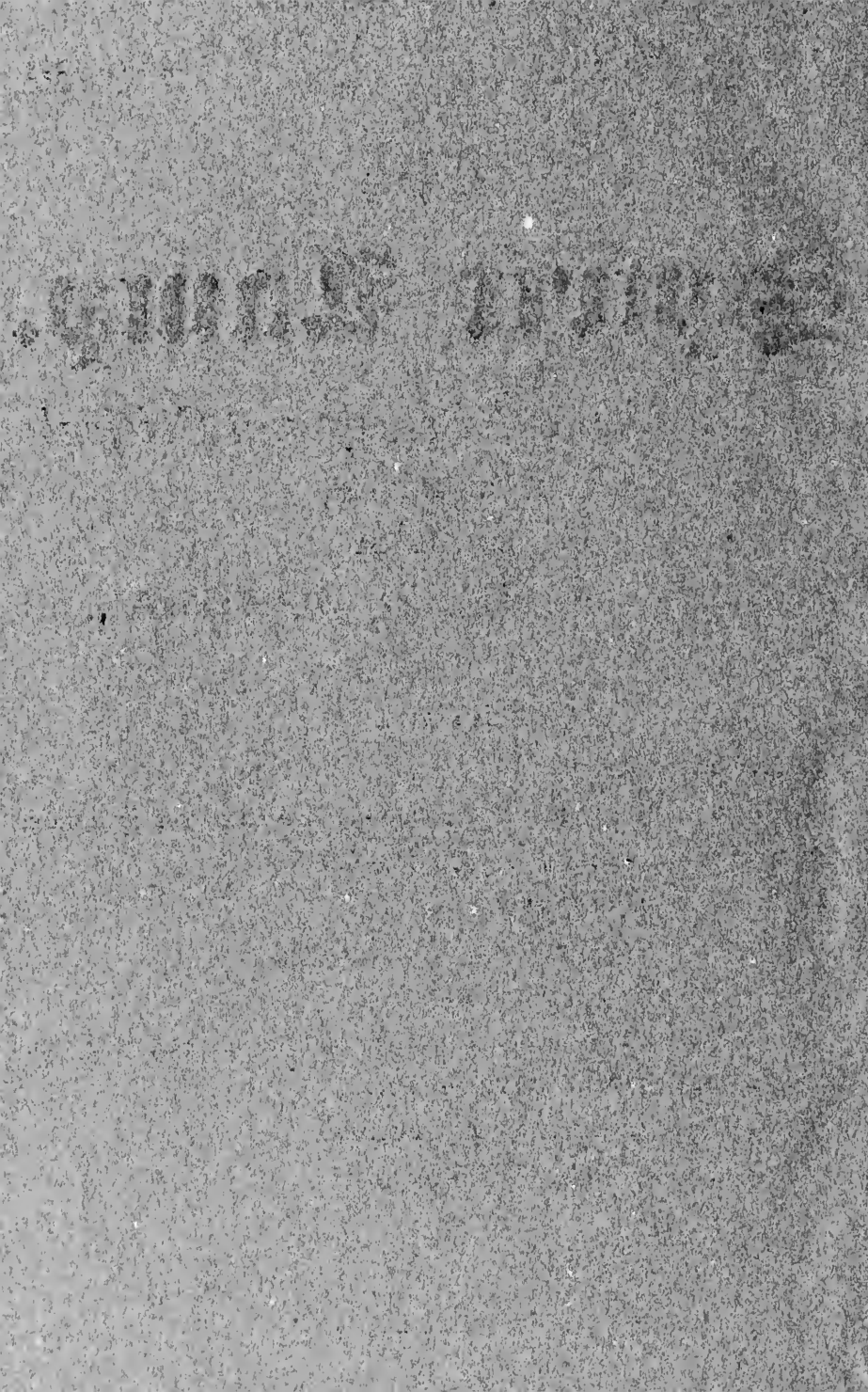
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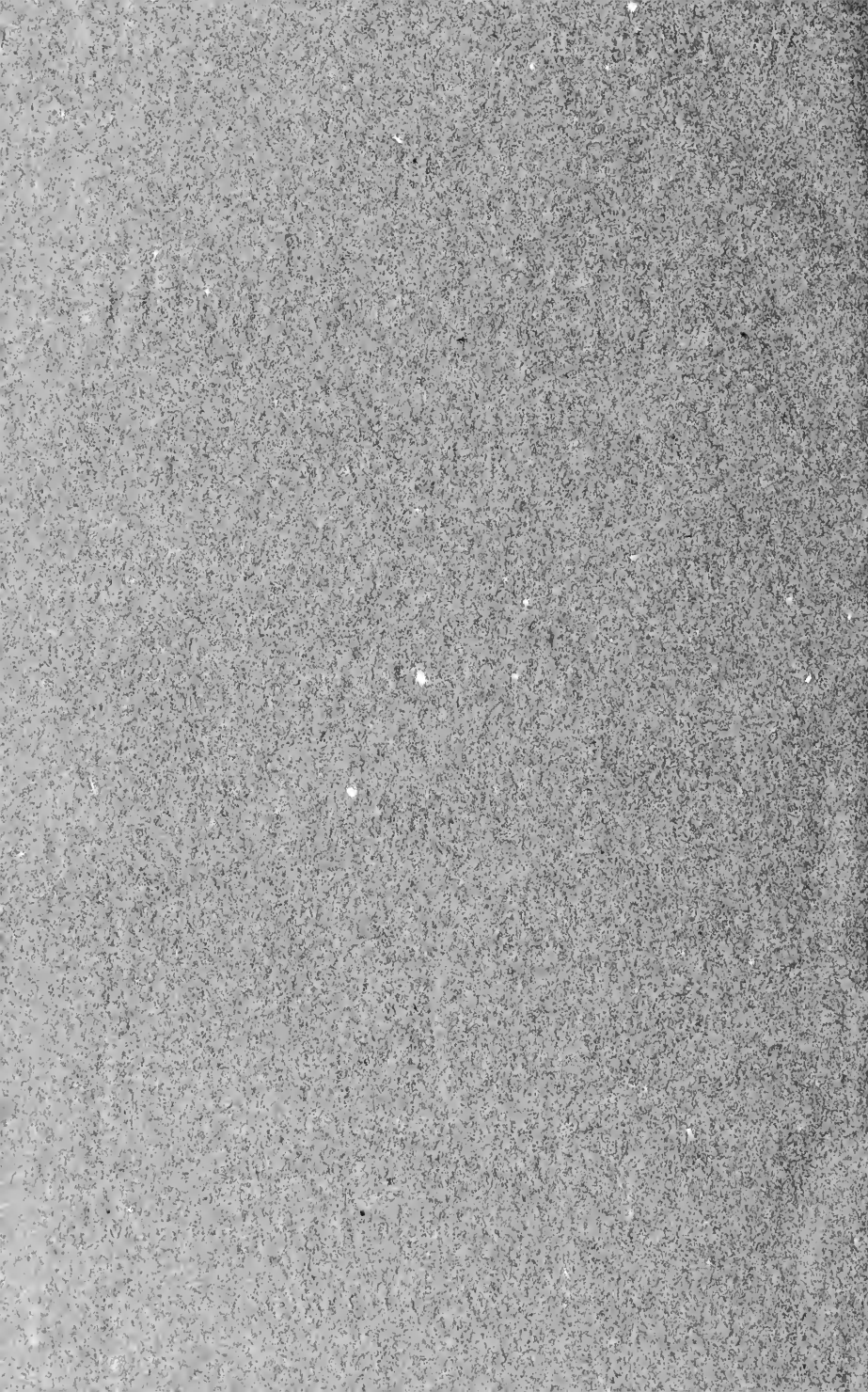
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